

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE CLERGYMAN'S INFLUENCE
IN A CONGREGATIONAL SYSTEM

A Dissertation
Presented to
the faculty of the School of Theology at Claremont

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Religion

by
Arthur Cecil Morgan
June 1969

CLAREMONT
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
JUN 19 1969

UMI Number: DP11620

UMI[®]

UMI Microform DP11620

Copyright 2005 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

This dissertation, written by

Arthur C. Morgan

*under the direction of the Faculty Committee,
and approved by its members, has been presented
to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of
Theology at Claremont in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of*

DOCTOR OF RELIGION

Faculty Committee

Robert J. Moore

Eric T. Peters

Date

June 1969

F. M. Trotter
Dean

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM	1
II. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DISCIPLES	9
Historical Background	9
Roots of Congregationalism	9
The Importance of John Locke	11
The Influence of American Republicanism.	12
The Campbells	13
Disciple Growth	20
Summary of Disciple History	22
III. DISCIPLE PRINCIPLES	23
The Nature of the Church	23
The Nature of the Ministry	29
Ministerial offices of the Church	33
The Immutable Ministry Questioned	36
The Church as an Ordered and Ordering Body	45
IV. HOW ORGANIZATIONS WORK	52
Formal Organization	53
Informal Organization	54
The American Baptists: An Example	59
V. INDIVIDUAL POWER IN THE GROUP	62
Power of Being	63
Factors in Personal Influence	65

CHAPTER	PAGE
The Elmhurst Study: A Mis-calculation of Power	72
VI. PERCEPTIONS OF POWER OF DISCIPLE CHURCHMEN .	75
Survey One	76
Survey Two	81
Comparisons of Surveys One and Two	92
Survey Three	93
A General Ministerial Survey	102
Summary	104
VII. CONCLUSION	106
Suggestions for Further Study	111
BIBLIOGRAPHY	112

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
1. Diagram of A Functional Church Organization for A Disciples of Christ Congregation	4
2. Some Important Assignments and Relationships for A Disciples of Christ Congregation	5
3. A Pyramid Organizational Chart	82
4. An Hourglass Organizational Chart	83
5. An Organizational Chart of the Disciples	84
6. A Pyramid Organizational Chart	95
7. An Hourglass Organizational Chart	96
8. The Disciple System of Organization	97

CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

The pastor in the tradition and history of the Disciples of Christ has never had official authority. Power resides formally with the laity. A typical organizational chart for a congregation shows a direct line from the president, through the board to the congregation. All boards, committees, and organizations are related directly to the organizational plan. The pastor, however, is not directly related to the structure. Rather he is usually related by dotted lines to the structure. In some unspecified way the clergyman makes contact with the structure. A typical statement from a Disciple congregation indicates the vague description of the pastor's relationship to the official organization:

The Minister of the Church shall perform the duties which usually pertain to that office. In general, his role in the Church shall be in accord with those principles set forth in guidance manuals for Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ). He shall, upon request, advise and counsel all organized Boards, groups, auxiliaries and committees. He shall, in cooperation with the Executive Committee encourage orderly procedures in the life and work of the Church through effective use of the Constitution and By-laws.¹

In examining this direction the role of the clergyman is not clear. "Duties which usually pertain to that

¹Constitution and By-laws, First Christian Church, Huntington Park, California, 1966, p. 9.

office" is an appeal to tradition. That the minister shall, "upon request," participate in boards, groups, auxiliaries, and committees, indicates an indirect relationship to the structure. He is asked to cooperate with the Executive Committee and to "encourage orderly procedures" but is nowhere related to the usual power-authority-responsibility line of administration.

Should a conscientious pastor look to the guidance manuals for the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ), as the constitution suggests, he would find the matter similarly vague. In the "Guidance Manual for Disciples of Christ" the author says:

In connection with the organizational structure of the congregation he is the general administrator. In this last named capacity it is up to him to see that the organization functions smoothly and efficiently, that it operates in an effective manner, that it produces and sustains a balanced program that satisfies the spiritual needs of the entire Church constituency.²

The author goes on to describe what the duties of the minister are in relation to the Church organization, saying:

The minister should be a 'chief engineer'. It should be remembered that the minister is the one man in most congregations who is expected to be trained and professionally experienced in administering a Church program. The minister should have a voice in the selection of leadership.

²Willard M. Wickizer, A Functional Church Organization (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1957), p. 17.

The minister should be a dreamer.
 The minister should be a supervisor.
 The minister should be an efficiency expert.³

Although offering explicit direction with regard to expectations for administration of the congregation, and directing its operation through supervision, the manual proposes an organizational chart which fails to show any direct administrative relationship with any group. (Figure 1)⁴

A more recent manual for Disciple congregations is A Church Program Guidance Manual. It also shows the minister at one side of the organizational chart. (Figure 2)⁵ The minister is related to more parts of the structure in this chart than in the earlier one. However, the nature of the relationship is equally unclear.

The expectation of the minister is still considerable. The minister, states the manual:

Articulates basic purposes of congregation's life and program...administers process of planning and implementation.⁶

Two other tasks are added to the minister, recruitment and development of leaders, and the development of a

³Ibid., pp. 18, 19.

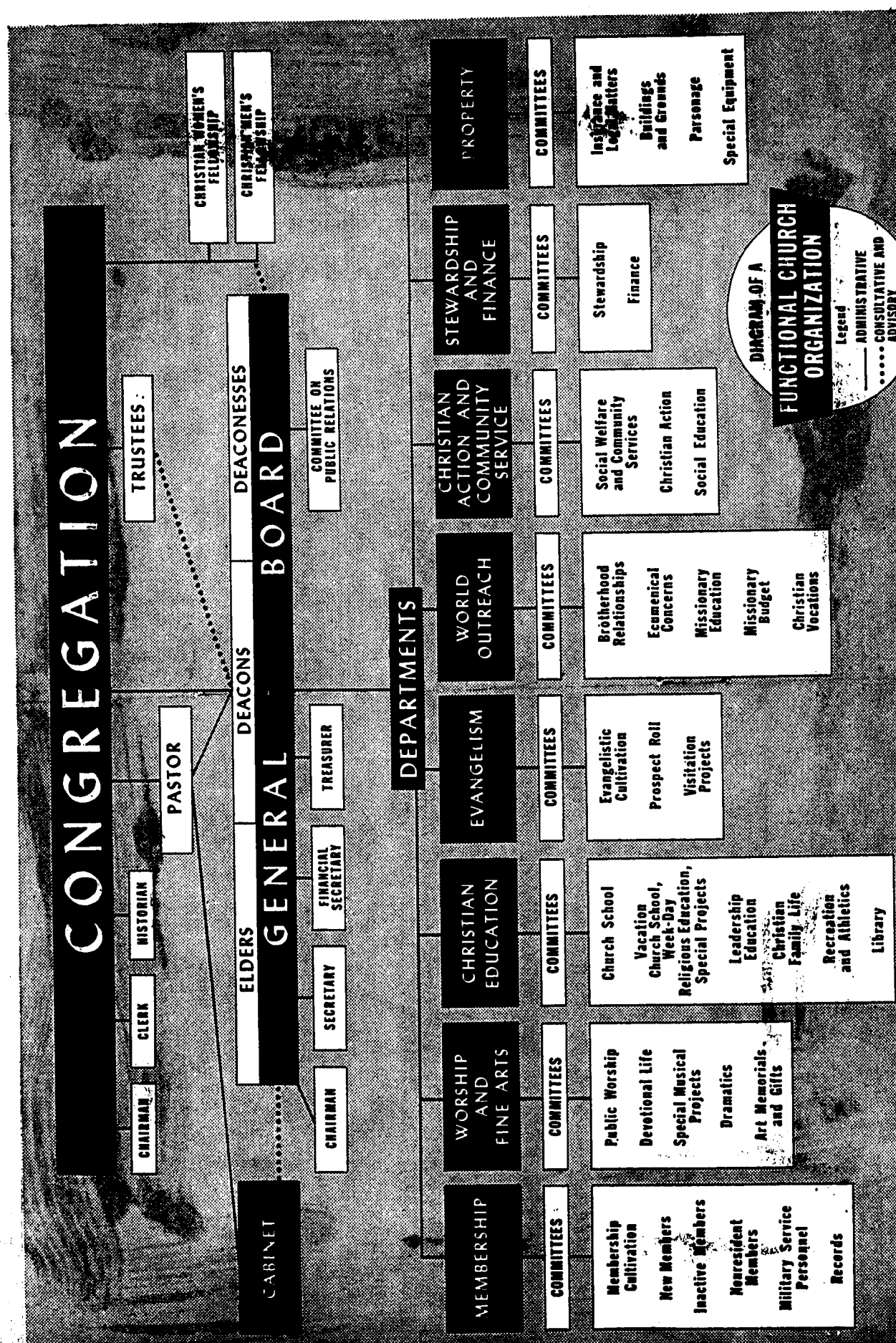
⁴Ibid., pp. 24, 25.

⁵Dale W. Medearis, A Church Program Guidance Manual (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1966), pg. of Fig. 2.

⁶Ibid., p. 28.

DIAGRAM OF A FUNCTIONAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION

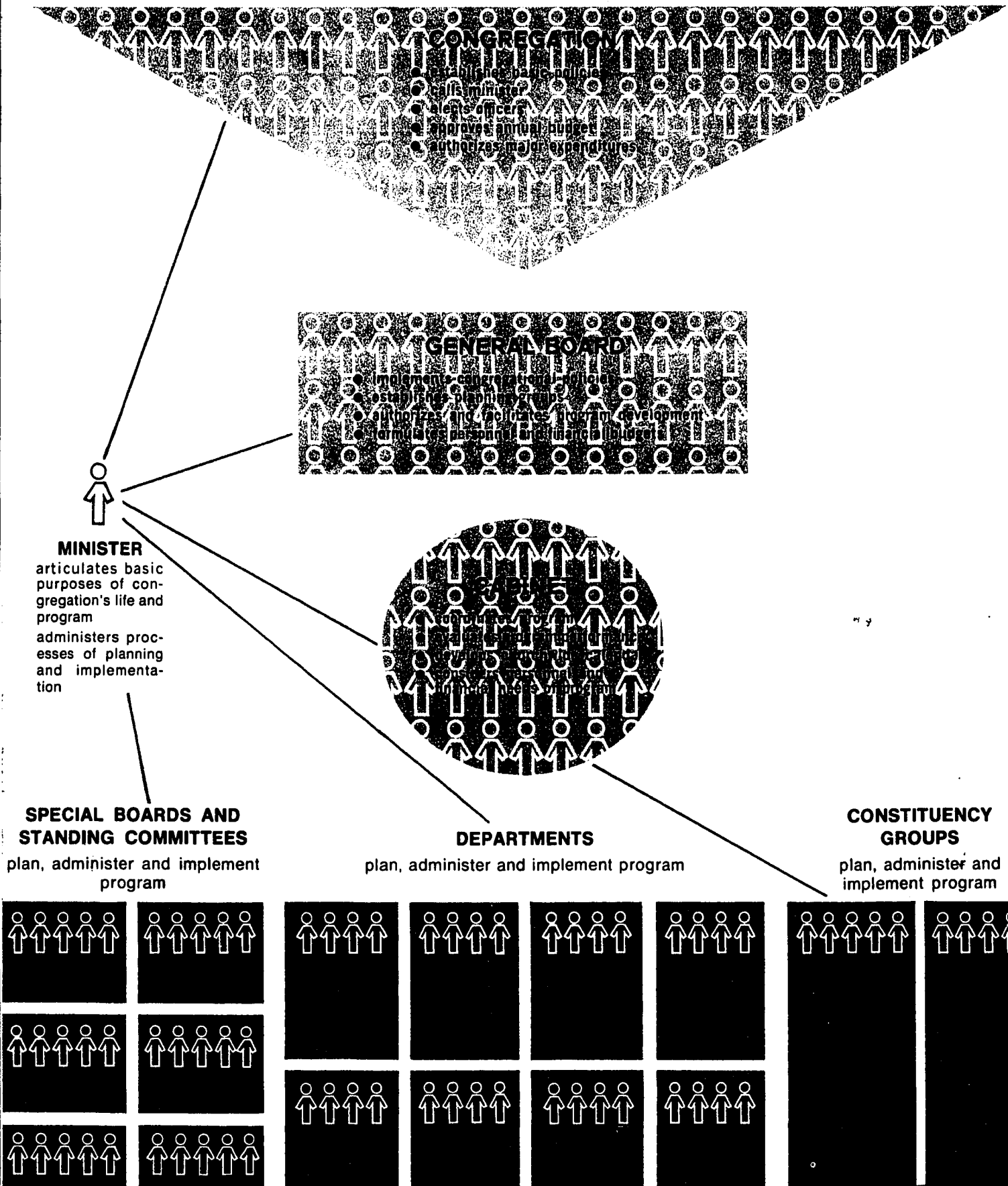
FOR A DISCIPLES OF CHRIST CONGREGATION



SOME IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENTS AND RELATIONSHIPS

FOR A DISCIPLES OF CHRIST CONGREGATION

**SOME IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENTS AND RELATIONSHIPS
CONCERNING PROGRAM PLANNING**



"creative attitude toward tension and conflict."⁷ Wide administrative responsibilities are outlined for the minister. These are his prescribed tasks. But nowhere in the constitution or guidance manuals is there any specific description with respect to how and where and with what authority the minister relates to the organizational system. This is the essence of the problem, the expectations and responsibilities of the Disciple clergyman, with no formal authority for fulfilling the expectations and responsibilities.

This dissertation will explore the problem and seek to discover whether official authority or formal power is necessary for the accomplishment of the clergyman's tasks. This matter has importance because it is the point of conflict between those who would alter the formal structure to give the clergyman more authority, and those who hold that the clergyman should not have such authority. The clergymen who would alter the formal structure believe that if the clergyman had more official power he would move within the official structure and be more able to accomplish the tasks of his ministry. Whether changing the minister's relationship to the official structure will add to his actual influence will be a major question to be answered.

⁷Ibid., p. 29.

An accompanying question has to do with present function. The Disciples have worked for over 150 years under a system in which the clergyman has functioned without formal authority. Congregations have been established, missionaries sent, colleges built, and a multitude of ministries accomplished. Clergymen have been instrumental in the accomplishment of many of these programs. They have clearly exercised major influence. The question has to do with how the Disciple clergyman, who stands outside the formal structures of the congregation, exercises his influence in such a way that work is accomplished.

To understand such a question and to find answers to the problem this dissertation will involve several important matters. First, a general historical summary of the Disciples of Christ will provide a background for understanding the congregationalism which marks the movement. Second, a deeper study of Disciple principles will provide the foundation for the Disciple tradition of organizational structure. A third major concern has to do with the nature of the ministry as Disciple historians have understood it, as well as in the light of the understanding of other churchmen. A fourth matter turns away from the historical and religious field to deal specifically with the question of power and how it actually works in human organizations. It is in this

section that important light will be shed on the question of the significance of formal structures of organization. A concluding group of three surveys will indicate how a pastor might determine understandings of power in his congregation, as well as showing possible future surveys which might be undertaken to determine the relationship between the formal structure of power and authority and how things actually take place. The conclusion will draw the various phases of this study together and offer a judgment as to how important official authority actually is in the clergyman's job, and offer a description of the way in which the clergyman actually exercises influence in the congregation.

CHAPTER II

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DISCIPLES

The frame of reference for this dissertation is the denomination known officially as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). To make denominational distinctions more precise the name Disciples of Christ, or simply Disciples, is used. The purpose of the historical review is to lay groundwork for understanding the place of the clergyman in the congregational structure and how it is that he is expected to function.

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Disciples of Christ are considered to be congregational in organizational structure. Congregationalism was nothing original with the Disciples, yet it is often not understood by those in episcopal or presbyterial systems. The historical background includes the roots of congregationalism, the philosophical basis of such a practice, and the circumstances of history which made such a system so appealing to the American frontier.

Roots of Congregationalism. The congregational idea is a separate subject in itself. However, the primary sources can be seen in a sketchy survey. Congregationalism has roots in the first half of the sixteenth century with the emergence of the Anabaptists. The Anabaptists were a lively offshoot of the reformed Church in Switzerland. Without detailing the arguments, the

Anabaptists, or "rebaptizers," emerged with ideas which were to continue to influence the history of the church. Among these ideas is that the church should be composed only of local associations of baptised Christians. These choose their own officers and administer their own policies. Such a church should be self-governing, independent of either state or higher ecclesiastical control.⁸

In the latter part of the sixteenth century the congregational idea appeared in England. One of its more widely known proponents was Robert Browne who adopted the idea of separatism. Separatists wanted a church free from the state church under the queen. A free congregation was established in Norwich in 1581. It was labeled a Separatist, or Congregational, Church. The Church came under immediate attack and fled to the Netherlands. It stood in direct opposition to the Puritans and others loyal to the Church of England.⁹

Browne's basic ideas were similar to those of the Anabaptists. Browne thought the only church to be the local body of believers. Each unit governs itself, selects its own pastor and other leaders, and operates free from any state or ecclesiastical control.¹⁰

⁸Williston W. Walker, A History of the Christian Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), pp. 366 - 368.

⁹Ibid., p. 461.

¹⁰Ibid.

Although the right of such congregations to exist was not then acknowledged, the idea was firmly planted. This idea of congregationalism later emerged in a number of denominations, one of which is the Disciples of Christ.

The Importance of John Locke. A most significant force in the background of the congregationalist principle and the rise of the Disciples on the religious scene is that supplied by the philosophy of John Locke. A survey volume such as the classic by Vernon Louis Parrington on the emergence of the American ideal repeatedly refers to the great influence of John Locke.¹¹ Church historian Williston Walker also notes the great influence of Locke in the development of both English and American political theory.¹² While making a great contribution to human thought on the question of human knowledge, Locke's influence on the Disciples of Christ has come from his valuing of individual freedom of intellect in politics and religion.¹³ His emphasis on democratic government, affirmation of reason, belief in diversity of opinion, and advocacy of religious toleration were to be seen again and again in the statements of purpose of the

¹¹Vernon Louis Parrington, Liberalism and Puritanism, 1620 - 1720 (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1927, 1930).

¹²Walker, op. cit., p. 486.

¹³Winfred Ernest Garrison and A. T. DeGroot, The Disciples of Christ (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1948), p. 55.

Disciples. It is significant to note that both the American ideal of government and the congregational ideal of the Disciples had their rootage in the same philosophy. Further we note that the Disciples rise was phenomenal in the early nineteenth century, possibly because the claims of congregationalism as espoused by the Disciples were in step with the way of thought in the American frontier.

The Influence of American Republicanism. As noted, both the Disciples and the newly constituted United States of America emerged during the same period of history. The year 1776 is the symbol of the triumph of republicanism over monarchy in America. The struggle was not simply to gain freedom from the monarch, but freedom for self-government. The Loyalists were not ready to give up the historic ties with the authority represented by the British throne. The revolutionists had dreams of self-government. Undergirded by the philosophy of thinkers like Locke, and encouraged by the great separation of the Atlantic Ocean, the republican-minded visionaries would not be denied.¹⁴ America would be a self-governing nation, free from any higher authority except that of God.

The significance of the year 1776 for the Disciples is that it is not many years from 1809 when the Disciples of Christ first appeared on the American scene. A form

¹⁴parrington, op. cit., pp. 237 - 239.

of "republicanism" was sought by the Disciple leaders. They too wanted freedom from a monarchical system. They saw no reason for the church to be subject to ecclesiastical authority in England either. They saw no reason why the church should not govern itself according to democratic precepts and select or elect its own leadership. People were already in tune with this reaction against monarchy whether it be of state or church. So American republicanism must be considered as influential in establishing a frame of thinking suitable for the Disciple movement.

It can be readily seen that the congregationalist idea was not original with the Disciples. A long history of practice, thought, and broadcasting of republicanism preceded the Disciples.

II. THE CAMPBELLS

Behind every organization or movement is a man, or a number of men. More widely known than many who had importance in the rise of the Disciples are the names of Thomas and Alexander Campbell. Thomas, the father, is less widely known than the son, Alexander. Thomas Campbell was a minister of the Seceder-Anti-Burgher-Old-Light-Presbyterian Church. He came to America from Ireland in 1807 as a minister of the Seceder Church. Alexander and the rest of the family followed in 1809.

Two major influences came upon the Campbells. First was in Independent Church in a neighboring com-

munity. From the leaders of this Congregational Church the Campbells were introduced to ideas of independence from creeds and ecclesiastical authority. They began thinking about the restoration of simple Christian life.

The second influence was the study of John Locke, especially his writings concerning non-sectarian Christianity. Thomas Campbell was thoroughly familiar with the mind of Locke when he left Ireland for America. Alexander Campbell held Locke in such esteem that he called him "the Christian philosopher."¹⁵

When he first arrived in America Thomas Campbell moved into his former denominational circles. He was received into the Associate Synod of North American, a synod which represented all Seceder Presbyterians in America. Soon, however, his opening mind began producing such unprecedented practices as open participation at the communion table by all Christians, service at the communion table by lay elders, and elimination of creeds as tests of worthiness for partaking in communion.¹⁶

As a result of his thought and practice Thomas Campbell was brought to trial by the Presbytery. The trial occurred off and on for over a week. The final

¹⁵Winfred Ernest Garrison and A. T. DeGroot, The Disciples of Christ (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1948), p. 126.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 132 - 134.

result was a combination dismissal by the Presbytery and renunciation of the authority of the Presbytery by Thomas Campbell. As a result he was now outside the ecclesiastical organization.

After several months a group of people gathered with Thomas Campbell and resolved to form an organization which was called "The Christian Association of Washington." It was organized as an association to avoid distinction as another branch of the fragmented church. Formed in the year 1809 the group took as its slogan, "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent."¹⁷ The society would seek to bring about reform in the churches. Thomas Campbell drew up a statement of principles and program which is widely known among the Disciples as "The Declaration and Address." Winfred Garrison notes that a similarity is evident between this document and the work of John Locke. He says:

Sentences could be quoted from Locke which sound as though they came straight from the "Declaration and Address."¹⁸

Following a preliminary statement which reads something like the by-laws of an organization the "Address" states

¹⁷Garrison and DeGroot, op. cit., p. 140.

¹⁸Winfred Ernest Garrison, An American Religious Movement (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1945), p. 61.

thirteen propositions. The list follows in condensed form:

1. The Church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one.
2. Congregations locally separate ought to be in fellowship with one another.
3. Nothing ought to be an article of faith, a term of communion, or a rule for the constitution and management of the church except what is expressly taught by Christ and his apostles.
4. The New Testament is as perfect a constitution for the worship, discipline and government of the New Testament church, and as perfect a rule for the particular duties of its members; as the Old Testament was . . . for . . . the Old Testament Church.
5. The church can give no new commandments where the Scriptures are silent.
6. Inferences and deductions from Scripture may be true doctrine, but they are not binding on the consciences of Christians further than they perceive them to be so.
7. Creeds may be useful for instruction but must not be used as tests of fitness for membership in the church.
8. Full knowledge of all revealed truth is not necessary to entitle persons to membership, "neither should they, for purpose, be required to make a profession more extensive than their knowledge." Realization of their need of salvation, faith in Christ as Savior, and obedience to him are all that is necessary.
9. All who are thus qualified should love each other as brothers and be united.
10. Division among christians is a horrid evil.
11. Divisions have been caused, in some cases, by neglect of the expressly revealed will of God; in others, by assuming authority to make human opinions the test of fellowship or to introduce human inventions into the faith and practice of the church.

12. All that is needed for the purity and perfection of the church is that it receive those, and only those who profess faith in Christ and obey him according to the Scriptures, that it retain them only so long as their conduct is in accord with their profession, that ministers teach only what is expressly revealed, and that all divine ordinances be observed as the New Testament church observed them.

13. When the church adopts necessary "expedients," they should be recognized for what they are and should not be confused with divine commands, so that they will give no occasion for division.¹⁹

To lift up some of the most important aspects of these formative statements, three stand out. First is the desire for Christian unity, a theme which Disciples have claimed as "our plea." Second, is a call for the restoration of those practices and structures set forth by Christ and his apostles. Third, the principles call for reliance on the Scriptures rather than on creeds or other "human inventions." While not stated openly, the implication is that the authority of the institutional church has no claim over the individual Christian. With this rejection of the authority of ecclesiastical authority is carried a rejection of the clergyman, or any representatives of a hierarchy, as having rule over either individual Christians or a congregation. Garrison and DeGroot summarize the key Disciple thinking as follows:

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 70 - 72.

Two basic truths were in the minds of the men whose work led to the beginnings of the Disciples of Christ. The first was that the church ought to be one, without sectarian divisions. The second was that the reasons for its divisions were the addition of human opinions to the simple requirements of Christ and his apostles as tests of fitness for admission to the one church, and the usurption of rule over the church by clergy and ecclesiastical courts unknown in the days of its primitive unity and purity.²⁰

Ecclesiastical power, carried out by the clergy, is expressly rejected.

Alexander Campbell came to similar conclusions on the basis of his own thinking. When he joined his father in America he was pleased with his father's new stance and preached wherever he could in support of a free church. In 1811 a congregation was officially formed at Brush Run in Pennsylvania. Church historian Williston Walker points out that from that time on, in spite of claims that they were only a movement, the followers of the Campbells "were practically a denomination, known popularly as the Disciples of Christ."²¹

Alexander Campbell's contribution to the movement came with his great communicative skills, both as a speaker and as a writer. He first edited the "Christian Baptist," dedicated to "detecting and exposing the various anti-christian enormities, innovations and corruptions,

²⁰Garrison and DeGroot, op. cit., p. 11.

²¹Walker, op. cit., p. 582.

which infect the christian church."²² Alexander's writings opened up debates about the proper course for the church. He won many minds to his way of thinking through his writings and public debates.

A fifteen year association with the Baptists came to an end, at which time Alexander Campbell founded the Millenial Harbinger which he edited for thirty years.²³ Through this channel his ideas flowed out to a rapidly expanding audience in the American frontier.

Particularly influential, with respect to this study, are Campbell's early attacks on the institutional church of his day. He was a sharp-tongued critic. Among his chief targets were "the pretensions of the clergy," and the "unauthorized organizations of the churches, societies to do the work of churches."²⁴ He attacked the "hireling priests" with extreme venom. He objected to all distinctions between clergy and laity. This way of thinking later mellowed to the extent that Alexander found himself urging both a paid settled clergy and a formal structure for congregational life.²⁵

There were other important names associated with

²²Garrison, op. cit., p. 72.

²³Ibid., p. 91.

²⁴Garrison and DeGroot, op. cit., p. 176.

²⁵Ibid., p. 217.

the Campbells. One was Barton W. Stone, whose influence and thought was active in North Carolina even before the Campbells arrived on the scene. Another name is that of Walter Scott, the first paid evangelist, whose preaching caused the movement to grow rapidly. The various names and organizations are recorded in the histories cited. For the purposes of this study, however, the primary influence is that of Thomas and Alexander Campbell.

III. DISCIPLE GROWTH

The basic pattern of congregational life was one of simplicity. Baptism, almost exclusively by immersion, and weekly observance of the Lord's Supper, were central practices. These practices, as well as preaching and management of the congregation, could be carried on without benefit of clergy. Lay leaders gathered and maintained the congregations. This congregational style suited the expanding frontier where people were scattered so that the gathering of a regular congregation to hear and support a resident preacher was impractical. Congregations sprang up everywhere along the frontier.

As the congregations increased Alexander Campbell found reason to change his thinking on a number of matters relating to church organization and ministry. Coordination was necessary for effectiveness. Campbell changed his position against organizations and cooperative work. Because Campbell changed his thinking and

worked at reorienting the thinking of others it is sometimes difficult to talk about "the Campbell position." The same Alexander Campbell who insisted that the local congregation was the basic unit of the church later, according to the historians:

Became a leader and the principal defender of the movement toward county, district, state, and eventually national organization.²⁶

So the Disciples not only grew with the American frontier by establishment of congregations, but grew also in terms of inter-congregational associations, establishment of missionary enterprise, founding of colleges, and creating a publishing house. The Disciples were found participating in ecumenical ventures and moving toward cooperation with numerous denominations. Some felt that the old "restorationist plea" was being abandoned, so the "North American Convention" came into being in 1927.²⁷ Thus the Disciples who came to bring unity to the church were themselves divided. The more conservative group is the "North American Convention." The more open and liberal part of the movement is now officially known as "The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)." It makes no claim any longer to be simply a movement, but accepts existence as a matured denomination.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 236.

²⁷ James Blair Miller, Our Church's Story (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1961), p. 123.

Disciples gradually came to accept a trained and settled clergy, Campbell himself having trained such a ministry at Bethany College. Most congregations had a paid pastor. However, power in the congregation always resided with the lay leaders.

IV. SUMMARY OF DISCIPLE HISTORY

The Disciples first appeared on the American scene early in the nineteenth century and grew with the expanding frontier. Thomas and Alexander Campbell provided primary direction to the movement which at first was fiercely opposed to church organization and professional clergy. When congregations were organized they were governed by the lay members, who also presided at the services of the church. The Disciples achieved rapid growth and evolved into a highly organized American denomination. Although many of the original ideals lie at the heart of the Disciples, there have been numerous changes from the Campbell's first thoughts. This is particularly true with regard to the nature of the congregation, church organization, and the ministry. The Disciples remain basically a congregationally governed church, thus keeping faith with its original history.

CHAPTER III

DISCIPLE PRINCIPLES

Behind the history of the Disciples have been certain principles and ways of understanding the church. On these principles and understandings rest the practices in congregational life. Of particular importance are those matters which have to do with the nature of the church and the nature of the ministry in Disciple thinking.

I. THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

Disciple understanding of the nature of the church has not been constant throughout its history. The matter continues to be an issue among factions in the Disciples. One important question has to do with whether the Disciples are a Church or Churches. At first the Campbells insisted that the only church was the local congregation. Their way of thinking at that time has been repeated more recently by Karl Barth who sees the local congregation as the essence of the church. Barth would consider it a gain if Luther's desire that the word "congregation" had been used in place of the word "church."¹ Later, however, Alexander Campbell changed his basic understanding about the essential unit of the church and defended his position

¹Karl Barth, Dogmatics in Outline (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), p. 141.

by saying:

The church . . . is not one congregation or assembly, but the congregation of Christ, composed of all the individual congregations on earth.²

Thomas Campbell had affirmed in the very first statement of the "Declaration and Address" that "The Church of Christ upon the earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one."³

In spite of this broad view of the nature of the church, Disciples have been strongly congregational in polity. Local autonomy and congregational independence have remained cherished claims among Disciples. W. B. Blakemore traces several varieties of congregationalism among the Disciples. First, there is "radical congregationalism," which is the absolute isolation of each congregation.⁴ Second, there are congregations related by "associations." Local autonomy is maintained for the congregation by relating to members of other congregations, not as a unit, but as individuals, for the purposes of mutual concern.⁵ A more recent development is establishment of structures directly responsible to the

²Garrison and DeGroot, op. cit., p. 235.

³Garrison, op. cit., p. 61.

⁴W. B. Blakemore, "The Issue of Polity for the Disciples Today," in The Renewal of the Church (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1963), III, 54.

⁵Ibid., III, 55.

congregations, and the relationship of congregations directly to one another as congregations. In the opinion of W. B. Blakemore:

The history of the Disciples in the early 1800's is evidence that even at our origins more than one conception of "congregational polity" was in the minds of the forefathers - sometimes they acted in accordance with one and sometimes in accordance with another of these conceptions.⁶

The debate about what actually constitutes the church is not limited to the Disciples. Karl Barth has argued for an understanding of the church as congregation in order that it may be visible. He fears that any other conception of the church is a slipping away, as he puts it,

into some sort of Cloud-cuckooland, in which the Christians are united inwardly and invisibly, while the visible Church is devalued.⁷

Emil Brunner takes the view that no church can be the "Ecclesia" because the Ecclesia is not a structured institution. This reflects one of the Disciple ways of thinking. Brunner writes:

The oneness of communion with Christ and communion with man is the characteristic mark of the Ecclesia . . . Where Jesus Christ is thus present among men, there the Ecclesia exists dynamically. Not an invisible church!⁸

⁶Ibid., III, 54, 55.

⁷Barth, op. cit., p. 142.

⁸Emil Brunner, The Misunderstanding of the Church (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953), p. 108.

Brunner argues at another point that

The New Testament writings with their picture of the Ecclesia show that the Lord created for himself a body which certainly was not a church, but a spiritual communion of persons.⁹

This is very much like the Christian Association which Thomas Campbell first formed. It was an "association" in order to avoid becoming a "church," which was thought at the time to be unscriptural.¹⁰

The problem with "spiritual communion" and "associations" was that they did not take into account the apparent necessity for organization. The Campbell response was in terms of a "Christian System." Alexander Campbell's book, The Christian System, implies that there is a clear understanding and system for the church.¹¹ The basic assumption is, in the words of Professor Dwight Stevenson, that the New Testament

Gives us express command or approved precedent all that we need to guide the modern church in matters of organization.¹²

Behind this assumption is the belief that Jesus gave the church its organization and plan and established it through his apostles. The early Campbell hope was to

⁹Ibid., p. 85.

¹⁰Garrison and DeGroot, op. cit., p. 140.

¹¹Alexander Campbell, The Christian System (Nashville: Gospel Advocate, 1964).

¹²Dwight Stevenson, "Concepts of the New Testament Church" in The Renewal of the Church, III, 38.

restore a New Testament pattern in the belief that man had usurped powers and actions that belonged only to Christ. His New Testament scholarship, coming before modern critical scholarship, did not take into account the eschatological expectations of the earliest disciples of Jesus. Canon Streeter, among many since his time, has pointed out that the early church was a community waiting the culmination of the Kingdom, and expecting that culmination any day. Therefore it could hardly be expected to be concerned about structuring itself for long institutional life.¹³

Rather than being a fully established "system" the primitive church was primarily a fellowship that grew into a movement and later evolved into an institutional structure. Says Dwight Stevenson:

Whatever the church was, it was not an organization; it acquired organization as a tool. But it was first a fellowship and a movement.¹⁴

The same emphasis is made by Garrison and DeGroot when they try to compare the earliest Campbell understanding of the nature of the church with the actual situation in New Testament times. They report that "fellowship was perhaps the most notable characteristic of the

¹³Burnett Hillman Streeter, The Primitive Church (New York: Macmillan, 1929), p. 69.

¹⁴Stevenson, op. cit., p. 49.

early disciples."¹⁵ These historians agree with other New Testament scholars of our day that the church was a community in waiting.

The dominant mood of the church was that of waiting for the end of the age, the coming of Christ in apocalyptic splendor, and the setting up of a new and heavenly order.¹⁶

Rudolph Bultmann has been the spokesman for those scholars who emphasize the eschatological expectations of the early Christian community. To accept the studies of Bultmann, and other similarly oriented New Testament scholars, the "restorationist" hope of recovering an original "system" founded by Jesus and the apostles becomes impossible. For Bultmann asserts:

Neither in the earliest Palestinian Congregation or in earliest Hellenistic Christianity was there originally any thought of instituting church regulations or offices - - which is just what one would expect in view of their eschatological consciousness of standing at the end of time.¹⁷

Therefore Disciples must reject any notion of a "blue-print" for the church in the New Testament. Further insight into Disciple understanding of the nature of the church is to be found in examination of Disciple understanding of the nature of the ministry.

¹⁵Garrison and DeGroot, op. cit., p. 22.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁷Rudolph Bultman, Theology of the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), II, 100.

II. THE NATURE OF THE MINISTRY

As reported in the previous section the early Disciple movement believed that the New Testament offered an exact plan for the organization of the church and the ordering of its leadership. Alexander Campbell argued:

As the Christian system is a perfect system, it wisely provides for its own perpetuity and prosperity by creating all necessary offices and filling them with suitable persons.¹⁸

On the basis of this understanding of the church Campbell could say with complete assurance that:

The standing and immutable ministry of the Christian community is composed of Bishops, Deacons, and Evangelists.¹⁹

It was Campbell's contention that the whole Christian community, by virtue of being called as Christians, may

by right preach, baptize and dispense the supper, as well as pray for all men, when circumstances demand it.²⁰

Every Christian was called to ministry, not only the select few. This ministry of the laity continues to be one of the marks of the Disciples. At the same time Campbell argued that the Christian system provides for setting aside specially qualified persons for special service in the church. He says that the system has four

¹⁸Campbell, op. cit., p. 61.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 60.

²⁰Ibid., p. 64.

points:

1st. It establishes the necessary offices for its perpetuity and growth.

2d. It selects the best qualified persons for those offices.

3d. It consecrates or sets those persons apart to those offices.

4th. It commands them to give themselves wholly to the work, that their improvement may keep pace with the growth of the body and be apparent to all.²¹

There is no doubt in his mind but what the church is the source of all such offices. Campbell says:

The community, the church, the multitude of the faithful, are the fountain of official power. The power descends from the body itself - not from its servants.²²

This is clearly an attack on both the Roman and other forms of polity in which ministerial offices are conferred by those already holding offices. It is also an attack on the idea that an individual may announce himself as called by God to office in the church. Campbell says the call to office always comes from the Christian community.

No instance can be found in the inspired writings, where the circumstances are detailed, of the call and appointment of any brother to any office, where the call and the appointment is not distinctly represented as an act of the brethren, and in no cases is an ordination or an appointment made without them. But their call is what in all cases gives them the right to officiate.²³

²¹Ibid., p. 64.

²²Ibid.

²³Alexander Campbell, Christian Baptist, I, 260, 261.

Campbell's early concern was to keep the clergy in proper relationship to the people with respect to power and authority in the church. He once said that no class or order of men had ever "obtained so much influence, or acquired so complete an ascendancy over the human mind as the clergy."²⁴ Campbell looked with disfavor upon the "hireling system" in which preachers trained themselves, then went on the market to the highest bidder. He was so extremely anti-clerical in his early years of influence that his position has haunted the Disciples for succeeding generations. As in the matter of the independence of the local congregation, so in the case of the professional ministry Campbell changed his position. His early attacks on the clergy were not easily forgotten. Granville Walker says:

In years to come the reproaches which Campbell cast upon a paid ministry were to act as a boomerang within his own movement, and he then is found in exactly the opposite role, strongly and urgently pleading for an adequate financial support for preachers and elders.²⁵

Campbell's anti-clericalism was rooted in two

²⁴Granville Walker, *Preaching In the Thought of Alexander Campbell* (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1954), p. 141.

²⁵Ibid., p. 145.

basic ideas. He believed that on the basis of these two "grand means" the clergy gained and held dominance over the church. The first means by which clergy gained dominance was by an "alleged special call of God" to the ministry. Campbells argument was that authority, or call come only from the congregation. God calls men, all men, to be Christians and to ministry. It is the church which calls them to their specific task. D. Ray Lindley states Campbell's position on the credentials for the ministry in large capital letters:

THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY CONSISTED NEITHER IN A PERSONAL AMBITION ON THE PART OF THE ONE CALLED, A MANDATE FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT, NOR A TRANSMISSION OF AUTHORITY FROM A SACERDOTAL SYSTEM, BUT IN A SOCIAL COMPACT WITH THE CHURCH.²⁶

Although this represents Campbell's view on the matter, the actual practice tended to be pietistic in nature so that Disciples expected their clergy to have "a special call." The important matter is the fact that authority for ministry depended on the congregation, not on some personal spiritual claims of the minister.

The second of the "grand means" by which Campbell believed clergy held authority was by formation of an organization which kept the laity submerged. Campbell's goal was to restore laity to their rightful place in the

²⁶D. Ray Lindley, "Types of Religious Leaders and the Churches Ministry," in The Renewal of the Church, III, 145.

church. It is to this situation that Campbell applies the "Christian system" and the "immutable ministry" concepts which he derives from the New Testament. By keeping the ministry in the hands and control of the congregation Campbell expected to avoid establishment of the strong clerical hierarchy against which he rebelled.

With this background it can be understood how the constitution of a local congregation could be prepared in such a way that the clergyman is outside the official lines of power and authority.

Ministerial offices of the Church. Alexander Campbell believed that the office of bishop was the last one created in the New Testament. The terms bishop, elder, or pastor were believed to refer to the same office. This office, as has been noted, emerged out of the congregation. The office had two primary tasks, presiding and teaching. The bishop did not claim a special personal call, nor did he train himself for the job. His call came from the congregation to which he had already demonstrated fitness for the office. The bishop, who is more like a present day president of a congregation or chairman of the board, is never considered to be a preacher. Granville Walker says:

Indeed it is clear throughout the writings of Campbell that the function of preaching was never held to be a part of the program within the local congregation. The bishop, or pastor, was a teacher,

not a preacher. His work was edification and not conversion, since it had to do with a congregation already Christian.²⁷

Another office of the church was that of evangelist. Although the bishop taught and exhorted his congregation, he was not an evangelistic preacher. The bishop gave basic week-by-week guidance to the congregation. The system was well-suited to the American frontier in that it made church life possible where there was no available clergyman. As the movement grew and congregations became larger the need for better qualified leadership was more apparent. Campbell's thinking evolved along with the evolution of the loose movement into a structured institution. The evangelist appeared with Campbell's express approval in 1827 when Walter Scott became the first paid servant of the Disciples.²⁸ He was charged with the responsibility to do what the local bishops did not do, namely to evangelize and organize congregations.

The common support of an evangelist by the Disciples caused them to form a resolution at a meeting at Wellsburg, West Virginia, which marked a turning point. The resolution read:

Resolved, that in order to remedy one of the things wanting in the churches, it is the duty of the congregations to cooperate in the selection of proper persons to proclaim the word, and to give them

²⁷Walker, op. cit., p. 158. ²⁸Ibid., p. 167.

directions in their labors, and to exercise supervision over them.²⁹

What is new in this resolution is a call for cooperation. The resolution says that "it is the duty of the congregations to cooperate." Further, the call is for selection of "proper persons to proclaim the word." This opens the way for trained clergy whose special function is to preach the gospel. While the resolution clearly establishes the evangelist as a paid clergyman it takes special care to see that the churches "give them directions" and "exercise supervision." The clergy remain responsible to the laity.

In Campbell's thinking an evangelist served the whole movement of Disciple congregations. The bishops had leadership only in the congregations that set them apart. He believed that the New Testament showed that a bishop had only one flock and no more. There could be more than one bishop in a church. These bishops, or elders, were the leaders and governing body of the local congregation. One among them would be the presiding elder.³⁰

These leaders were set aside by ordination. It was understood that the congregation was thereby granting certain authority to the one ordained. Granville Walker points out that this was done because the congregation recognized "the necessity of delegated authority in any

²⁹Ibid., p. 172.

³⁰Ibid., p. 157.

social arrangement."³¹ Ordination did not grant any extraordinary spiritual powers, only the right to function in behalf of the people of that particular congregation. Under this system what clergy there were owed their office to the congregation. So it was with all the offices. Clergy could hardly become a power block together, or function individually as rulers of specific congregations. The lines of power, authority, and responsibility are laid down. The pastor, bishop, or elder, whatever his title, paid or volunteer, owes his office and his authority to the congregation in the Disciple system.

The Immutable Ministry Questioned. Campbell was sure that the New Testament system of church organization had no place for an office which gave dominance to any one type of ministry. Under the Disciple system, as influenced by the two Campbells, the role of the clergyman was so altered that there was no possibility for either rule by clergy or the development of ecclesiastical power groups. The system was proclaimed as biblical and therefore immutable. The question must be raised as to whether there can be any such New Testament "system" or "immutable ministry" or "one order" of ministry, of an

³¹Ibid., p. 189.

office which "now, and ever was, the same."³²

Rudolph Bultmann has already been cited as arguing against the idea that the earliest Christian congregations had "any thought of instituting church regulations or offices."³³ A more accurate description, in the thinking of Bultmann and other New Testament scholars, is that of the evolution of church offices. At first there were no officials. Peter, John, and James were the persons with authority in the Palestinian congregations, while in the Hellenistic congregations the founding apostles were the authority persons. Soon, according to Bultmann, there were the elders. This suits Campbell's analysis. A group, or board of elders, became the leaders of Christian congregations. This was a natural pattern for organization since it followed the synagogue organizational system.³⁴ Elders also appeared in the Hellenistic congregations.

Of particular importance is that these leaders were not originally officials, but simply leaders. They assumed authority on the basis of their personal qualities and standing in the Christian community. Only gradually did the functions become those of officials.³⁵ Ronald

³²Campbell, The Christian System, p. 60.

³³Bultmann, op. cit., II, 100.

³⁴Ibid., II, 101.

³⁵Ibid., II, 102.

Osborn refers to these as "authority figures." They are the accepted leaders whose power is based on some personal quality such as charisma, leadership, social position, or wealth. Heads of houses, hosts of house-churches, were held in esteem. This leadership of influence could be called a "ministry." Osborn says:

To this ministry belong those persons who by the dynamics of any particular group, whatever its theoretical procedures of decision-making, emerge as part of the "establishment" -- men whom our fathers called the "weightier brethren" or whom some sociologists denominate "charismatic leadership."³⁶

What we note here is that offices were not so much founded or established as they were evolved. Leaders emerged because leaders were needed. The special leaders, or special ministry, were needed to operate along side the Christians who also shared in that ministry. This fits Alexander Campbell's understanding that in the New Testament the church called men to ministry, either by need to fill a function, or in recognition of the person's standing within the community of faith, rather than on the basis of some divine or ecclesiastical appointment. Osborn points out from his New Testament survey that

Aside from Saul's conversion - and - calling to the apostolate, Scripture gives no instance in which any one received a private call from God to the public ministry of the church.³⁷

³⁶Ronald Osborn, In Christ's Place (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1967), p. 214.

³⁷Ibid., p. 215.

Bultmann distinguishes between leaders who were primarily related to a congregation and those who had a calling for a more specialized task. Such persons as prophets, apostles and teachers were functionaries whose service also came from special gifts and inspiration rather than solely out of leadership in the congregational organization. The evolution began, in Bultmann's analysis, with inspired people coming to offices. Later, the inspiration or charisma was something which came with the appointment at ordination. What first was acknowledged by ordination later came to be given at ordination by the elders of the congregation.³⁸

The next step in the evolution of church offices was the development of the apostolate. Apostles are seen as the founders of the whole church, while bishops and elders are understood to be responsible for congregations. The result is that "The whole Church rests upon the office-bearers, whose office is held to go back in uninterrupted succession to the apostles (the twelve)."³⁹

After this development the Spirit is associated with the office itself and is transmitted by ordination.

³⁸Bultmann, op. cit., II, 105.

³⁹Ibid., II, 107.

Thus the proclamation of the word "became the affair of the congregational officials."⁴⁰ Campbell would not accept this step as being true to the original system.

Bishops, according to Bultmann's analysis, gradually became congregational officials. The congregations which formerly awaited the end of the age were now organized and began to have recognized leaders. The congregations began to focus on the Lord's Supper as the institution of salvation. When this happened, the whole shape of the church was altered. Bultmann says:

Then eschatological consciousness is overshadowed or supplanted by sacramentalism, and the bishop who leads worship and administers the sacrament becomes the priest, whose office gives him a quality which separates him from the rest of the congregation, making them laymen.⁴¹

As a result of this development the official order of clergy became the necessary functionaries of the sacramental system. Bultmann points out that this is a decisive point in the development of leadership in the church. It is a major change in direction from the earliest practice of the church. He reports:

The persons who carry out the cultus achieve priestly character and the distinction between priests and laymen, unknown in the New Testament, and indeed, contradictory to it, develops.⁴²

⁴⁰Ibid., II, 108.

⁴¹Ibid., II, 110.

⁴²Ibid.

It is this development, in which the saving acts of God are thought to be dependent on the ordained clergy, that Campbell reacted against. He sought an earlier stage in the development of the church's order in which the proclamation of the Word and the observation of the sacraments were not the property of offices.

It is Bultmann's contention that the church developed greater structure in light of postponed eschatology. Neither Thomas nor Alexander Campbell seem to take the eschatological expectation into account. Rather, they took the development of the church in mid-stream and made it the norm. Thus there continues through the Disciple movement a degree of dependence on the apostles as the source for church structure. The reasoning goes that Christ chose the apostles and through them established the church. The "restorationist plea" has actually sought to restore what Bultmann considers to be but one stage in the development of the Christian church, namely the stage in which the apostolate came into prominence. At the same time the Disciples have sought to recover a level of development where the ministerial office was locally given and locally controlled by the congregation. To give more than token recognition to the existence of ministerial offices has been resisted.

Ronald Osborn has undertaken an extensive re-study of the nature of the ministry. He writes both as

an ecumenically-oriented biblical scholar and a Disciple churchman. His understanding of the ministry also raises questions about the "immutable" ministry of Campbell's understanding. Osborn says:

The contention of this book is unequivocal: both the will of Christ for his body the church and its effectiveness as his servant-people in the world demand within the church an order of ministers.⁴³

From a thorough examination of the New Testament Osborn finds the understanding of the church to be more complex than would be indicated by Campbell's Christian System. For example, Osborn reports seventeen conclusions from his studies of the offices of the New Testament church. The conclusions are summarized by Osborn as follows:

1. There are no clearly defined offices.
2. Ministry is based on charisma, gift.
3. The apostles were unique offices.
4. Many ministries are spontaneous.
5. Some ministries depend on spiritual gifts.
6. Some ministries are more offices than appointments.
7. Some ministries had continuing nature.
8. Some ministries were full-time.
9. There was no title of Priest in the New Testament church.
10. There are no indications about administering sacraments.
11. Some ministries were world-directed.
12. Some ministries were evangelical.
13. All ministry is related to the body of Christ.
14. Some ministries were especially for building up the body.
15. There is an endless variety of ministries.
16. Ministry for building up the church is properly subject to the ordering of the church.
17. Some ministries have authority.⁴⁴

⁴³Osborn, op. cit., p. 61.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 68.

From Osborn's analysis it is seen that the ministry is not limited to a single function. Ministry has variety and complexity. Again the question is raised about Campbell's concept of an "immutable ministry" in the New Testament.

Osborn, like Streeter and Bultmann, sees a ministerial order emerging from the times in which the church was evolving into an institution. Instead of following a plan set forth by Christ and the apostles, the church applied the structures familiar in the institutions of its day as models for organization. Osborn describes how such a word as "diakonos" is taken from secular usage and given special meaning for the ministry of the church. He says:

The Christian minister has his counterpart in the duly constituted public official charged with responsibility for civil order. The connotations of service always remain with these words, but they do not suggest the menial or the drudge.⁴⁵

Osborn is very clear in pointing out that such a servant ministry is no barrier to an elevated view of the ministerial office. The office is elevated, not for purposes of prestige or power, but for its importance to the church. There appears a distinction between those so elevated and those not elevated. There is an ordering. Although all Christians share a common servanthood all

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 69.

Christians are not ministers. Osborn points out:

Every citizen is not a magistrate, every soldier is not an officer, every musician is not a conductor, and every servant is not a minister - although every minister should be a servant.⁴⁶

What is apparent is that a system of social structure exists in the New Testament church in which there are higher and lower leadership responsibilities, given secular titles, resulting in what Osborn has called an ordering of the ministry.

What becomes evident is that Campbell chose one stage in the development of the ordering of the church as representing the intent of Christ and the apostles. He did recognize that the New Testament offers models for several varieties of ordering when he said that the government of the New Testament churches was "Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Congregational, all three"⁴⁷ But he chose to reject the validity of the Episcopal and Presbyterian forms of church government in favor of the congregational system.

The truth is that there is no simple Christian "system" or church government. The idea that a system of organization began with Jesus and the apostles and continues unaltered through the first century has been

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 69.

⁴⁷Alexander Campbell, "Church Organization," Millennial Harbinger (1853), 123.

destroyed by Streeter, Bultmann, Stevenson, and Osborn as has been previously cited. The direction of the organization is clearly a progression. It moves from the first informal fellowship in Jerusalem, centering around the apostles, to the highly structured system which emerged in Paul's later ministry. Thus evidence can be found in the New Testament for every type of organization between an informal gathering of the friends of Jesus to a formal system ruled by a monarchical bishop. Dwight Stevenson outlines the development when he says:

In its simplest form this meant the rule of one bishop over one church in one city. But other stages soon followed. A second stage, only slightly more advanced in time, was the rule of the provincial capital over all bishops and churches of his province. A third stage was reached when the capital of the Empire came to rule over all the bishops in provincial capitals, and through them over all the bishops of the Empire. Such authority grew up naturally. Having lost its spiritual center at Jerusalem, the church in time turned to a new one in Rome. Church history tells us without a doubt that this is the route ecclesiastical structure took in the first three centuries.⁴⁸

With wider access to the total thinking of Alexander Campbell, and with more recent understanding of New Testament scholarship, the Disciple clergyman of recent years has little of the assurance earlier Disciples had with regard to the nature of the ministry.

The Church as an Ordered and Ordering Body. The preceding two sections have supported the idea that the

⁴⁸Stevenson, op. cit., p. 47.

church is, in fact, an ordered body. While having only minimal structure in its earliest fellowship era, like all social organizations, the church soon took on structural characteristics. The church, as has been argued, did not remain, (if it ever was), an invisible, mystical entity, but rather showed outward, visible markings of an institution. John MacQuarrie has pointed out the organizational reality and necessity for the church when he says:

Every kind of association, if it is not to fall apart needs some kind of leadership, or government, or authority, and indeed we find something of the sort even in those Christian groups that think of themselves as most 'free' from ecclesiastical forms. We may be told that Jesus Christ is the sole head of the church, and of course all Christians recognize him as such. But Clearly, (as Calvin says), Jesus Christ does not in person decide about the day to day questions that confront the community of faith.⁴⁹

The biblical analogy for structure is most commonly "the body of Christ." While some have attached the word "mystical" to this image, this misses the actual functioning of parts (people) in relationship (organization) to fulfill the purposes suggested by the head (Christ).

For those who think of the church as a spiritual entity the "body" image offers the idea of flesh and bone and visible presence. Further, it suggests recognizable form or shape. In spite of its visible shape and flexi-

⁴⁹John MacQuarrie, Principles of Christian Theology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966), p. 387.

bility, the church is not described as a jellyfish that can be shaped into any mold. Rather, the church is described as a body which has skeletal characteristics which hold the flexible outward parts in somewhat consistent and recognizable shapes. In short, "body" suggests structure.

The church of the 1960's, with its rebellion against institution and its zealous embracing of the fellowship (koinonia) nature of the church, needs to correct itself by re-establishing the biblical image of the body. It is only as body, as visible, structured form, that fellowship has ongoing life and meaning. The instruction in the letter to the Ephesian Christians is to the point:

Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love. (Ephesians 4:15, 16)

This echoes an earlier statement that in Christ "the whole structure is joined together and grows." (Ephesians 2:21) The Christian's concern, the work of the ministry, is to build up the "Body." This is the process of edification. Edification is not only a personal spiritual matter, but includes bringing the Christian into a healthy, functioning relationship within the body of Christ. Edification has to do with building up the church. Osborn says:

Edification is not only of inspiration, but administration. We suffer from a tendency to regard the concerns of structure, the demands of committee work, and all the chores of the church's business as intrusions on our time and concern, when we really want to be about the "main task."⁵⁰

We see, therefore, that the church is not only an ordered body, but an ordering body. It has an order and it is responsible for building up the order for the well-being of the whole body. It is Osborn's contention, coming out of a careful study of New Testament terms describing aspects of order in the church, that the church was from the beginning developing a structure, and that the structure provides for and requires an ordered ministry. He says:

From a reading of these texts in which these words occur, one powerful conclusion overwhelms us: THE ORDERING OF THE CHURCH IS A WORK WHICH GOD BEGAN IN JESUS CHRIST, AND FOR THIS WORK THE WHOLE CHURCH, UNDER GOD, IS NOW RESPONSIBLE.⁵¹

A special ministry came into being out of organizational necessity. The church itself created the offices and granted them to specific individuals. It examined, approved, appointed, and dedicated men to special tasks of ministry in the church. Special ministry was passed to new hands when age or need made it necessary. A company of the ministry emerged within the body of Christ. It was charged with responsibility if not with power.

⁵⁰Osborn, op. cit., p. 183.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 193.

Osborn states:

The minister has his standing as a public servant within the church, as one to whom the body of believers has entrusted peculiar personal responsibility for the care of the whole body and for its mission.⁵²

The minister receives his office from the church, the ordering body, and his task is to care for both the body and its mission. The place of the clergyman in the church is described by Osborn as follows:

The head of the church is Jesus Christ. Every act of public ministry in its common life is performed by his authority and in his name. But no man (except the Spirit-filled prophet) takes it upon himself in his own right to act in the name of Christ. The church acting as the body in obedience to its head imposes ordination upon those whom it finds worthy to serve as ministers of the Word. Some ecclesiastical traditions view the authority of Christ as transmitted by the corporate decision of the whole people; others see it given primarily through those already ordained or consecrated as bishop.⁵³

The clergyman owes his office to the church from which it rises.

The question for the Disciples has been where authority originates with respect to the ordering of the church and the office of the ministry. Campbell sought to discover the fountain for authority in the New Testament "system." The debates on the matter generally center about whether there is a single source of church order. Since it is concluded that the New Testament

⁵²Ibid., p. 219.

⁵³Ibid., pp. 248, 249.

offers no single plan, the debate centers about which plan is more authentic. Which plan reflects the intent of Christ or the apostles? It is as though some special plan for the church exists which will settle the question of where power in the church actually resides.

What appears more fruitful is an analysis of the ordering of the New Testament church which begins with the recognition that the church was like any other sociological entity. It had characteristics of any human group in that some structure was required. While it is possible to argue that the ordering of the church was the result of some divine order, a more realistic argument would be that its ordering emerged as a group necessity. W. B. Blakemore, in his analysis of the locus of power in the New Testament church, suggests that power emerges out of acts of association. He says that each such association "creates new power and new ability, new responsibility and therefore new authority."⁵⁴ Therefore the New Testament church, with its growing order, may be seen as a model which typifies the development of any organization. In short, the New Testament organization was not, as Campbell made it seem, a plan given by Christ and his apostles. Rather, the New Testament organization was the necessary development of the

⁵⁴Blakemore, op. cit., p. 78.

people who found their common bond in Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER IV

HOW ORGANIZATIONS WORK

The New Testament church found models for its structure in secular institutions of its day. In addition it developed its own patterns out of the dynamic needs of the situation. It may be hypothesized that the secular understanding of power and organization is similar to that which actually operates in the church. Our premise is that the church is a structured organization as well as a mystical body, and that it is subject to the same dynamic factors as any other social organization. We agree with Robert Arnott who says:

Like any corporate group, it (the church) is an institution and a proper subject for sociological analysis. Sociology and political science are both capable of throwing a flood of light on the institutions of the church and on the ethics which guide their administration. Nor have the scholars who have subjected the church to sociological study chosen a trifling field of inquiry. The church is one of the greatest of human institutions. It embraces such a vast diversity of systems of organization and such a long history of change and adaptation that it should come as no surprise to find in it a fruitful field for sociological research.¹

Through the study of the secular approach to organizations and the function of power within them, we hope to discover how power actually works in the church.

¹Robert J. Arnott, "Toward a Theological Study of Institutions", Religion in Life, XXXVII (Autumn 1968), 422.

I. FORMAL ORGANIZATION

Max Weber said that

Power is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests.²

According to Weber's theory, such power was channeled through a pyramid from the top downward. In such a corporate group the specific authority was given at each level to go with the responsibility. Authority represents the power to achieve the expected task. If each person in the order responded properly the organization goal would be achieved. Weber sees this as legal authority.

Weber distinguishes legal from traditional authority. In traditional authority, in which long-standing tradition has been "canonized", there is an accepted, though not legal, way for things to get done. Persons in power have authority in so far as they fit into the traditional pattern. Disciple history shows that the congregational system is one which operates more on the basis of tradition than on a legal basis. It may be argued that the New Testament basis of authority rose first on the basis of traditional, rather than legal, authority.

A third distinction made by Weber is that kind of

²Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 152.

authority which goes to the charismatic individual that develops disciples or followers who are responsive primarily to his direction.

Weber has made a major contribution in the understanding of organizations by opening the classical system of management to sociological question and analysis. Management science could no longer look at organization in simple mechanical terms. Numerous sociological, group dynamics, and psychological factors enter into the function of organization.

A classical system of organization could be represented by an organizational chart in the shape of a pyramid. In each box would be the title of the position. The chart presumably shows the way in which the system functions. This is called the formal organization. It is the way the system is supposed to work.

II. INFORMAL ORGANIZATION

The newer theorists, influenced by Weber and Chester Barnard, Fredrick Taylor, Henri Fayol, and others, have shown that the classical system of organization does not tell the whole truth about how power is actually exercised in an institution. Alongside the formal system there is an informal system.

To realize this fact is to avoid the possible pitfall of thinking that the role of the clergyman in the congregational system could be cleared up by drawing

a new organizational chart to legitimize the actual informal system. Ernest Dale suggests that it is not wise to attempt to make the informal structure into a formal structure. He says:

The informal organization has no stability. Alliances are formed and broken; new conflicts arise within it; a change in the incumbent of a single executive job can change its character entirely. No company could hope to develop and reach clear-cut goals if it built its organization structure on the shifting sands of the informal organization.³

The late Douglas McGregor, former Professor of Management at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, also makes the distinction between formal and informal organization. He refers to the organization chart as a "map" which is a "rough approximation at best".⁴ The map is the ideal and is useful for filling positions and resolving major conflicts. However, says McGregor,

There are many ways of getting things done outside the formal channels of organization, and these are used regularly.⁵

To do things outside the formal channels one is usually assuming authority that extends beyond his due. McGregor points out what clergymen in the Disciple tradition often complain about, that is, "authority never in fact equals

³Ernest Dale, Management Theory and Practice (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965), p. 322.

⁴Douglas McGregor, The Professional Manager (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), p. 33.

⁵Ibid.

responsibility."⁶

When it is recognized that things are being done outside the formal channels, the formal organization remains as a tether to be used as necessary. This is illustrated by the response of some leaders of a local congregation as to why the clergyman was included in the official meetings of the Church "by invitation only." The response was that the intention was not to keep the clergyman out. In fact, it was expected that he would participate fully in Church's life and work. The reason the official document is written as it is, is to give the congregation power in case the clergyman begins to assume too much dominance. This seems to be the function of a formal system where the organization clearly operates on an informal system.

In the Disciple practice of the ministry the clergyman acts beyond his authority and outside his prescribed bounds. He sets up the meetings to which he is supposed to await invitation. He helps appoint chairmen, and works with them to establish the meeting agenda and to suggest action. He is not the outsider which the formal structure shows him to be. He is, in fact, the insider. Without formal authority, he acts. He is often found to be making binding agreements in behalf of the

⁶Ibid., p. 34.

congregation. He does these things with the full knowledge that at any time the congregation may pull in the tether and put a limit on his functions. He knows that he acts beyond his authority many times. He knows that in his tradition the actual authority belongs to the congregation and to the official board.

This is no unusual way to operate. McGregor points out that in the business world employees often violate the formal system in order to achieve the organizational goals. He states:

A very large proportion of employees -- workers and managers alike -- accept the implicit obligation of the employment contract to a degree that leads them to try to help the organization succeed in spite of restrictions and obstacles imposed by the formal structure and controls.⁷

The same idea is reflected in the thinking of Abraham Zelevnik in his book on leadership. He talks of initiative to break outside the formal organization as an important factor in human creativity. He writes:

Under present conditions individuals are creative despite rather than because of systems of organization.⁸

These evident endorsements of acting beyond formally stated boundaries take away some of the sense of strangeness felt when such action occurs in the church.

⁷Ibid., p. 37.

⁸Abraham Zelevnik, Human Dilemmas of Leadership (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 205.

The congregational way of getting things done outside of formal structures has a secular model in the realm of business operation. Just as business works with those channels most likely to accomplish the goals of the organization, so does the congregational clergyman. Just as the business manager knows that he could be pulled into line by the formal structure, so does the congregational clergyman.

The informal system, therefore, is the channel through which the clergyman works to get things done. He will remain aware of the formal system, and seek to keep faith with its overall purposes.

The clergyman in the Disciple system actually has greater freedom than his more structured brethren. While not having official authority in the congregation, he is not limited in other ways. The absence of a description of powers and duties, and the absence of an adequate description of just how the congregation is to be managed, leaves the Disciple clergyman unusual opportunities for doing what he wants to do. Dr. W. B. Blakemore, in a conversation on this subject, commented that the Disciple clergyman has much more power than people think. "He steps into a power vacuum," said Dr. Blakemore. This "power vacuum" is the gap which exists with regard to authority in the church. Although adequately describing the congregation as the seat of power, Disciple organ-

ization does not specify how that power is transmitted. Moreover, it does not provide for supervision and coordination. The vacuum is usually filled by the clergyman.

The clergyman's problem, then, is similar in some respects to that of a manager who finds himself charged with a responsibility, yet bound by a structure that neither grants adequate structure, nor adequate authority, for doing the job. Like his business counterpart, the clergyman seeks to accomplish the organization's goals in ways other than those spelled out for him in whatever formal documents the congregation may have.

His problem becomes that of anyone who works with any group, whether it be secular or sacred. He must work by those processes and principles which will result in the achievement of goals. He must work in full awareness of a formal structure, yet realize that organizations largely operate by informal structures.

III. THE AMERICAN BAPTISTS: AN EXAMPLE

An illustration of formal and informal power structures as they operate in the congregational system is found in a study of the American Baptists. Paul Harrison notes that authority is "formalized or institutionally recognized power."⁹ Like the Disciples,

⁹Paul Harrison, Authority and Power in the Free Church Tradition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), p. 61.

Baptists do not recognize the legitimacy of authority in their structure. Therefore, power is exercised informally, or illegitimately. Leaders are given certain responsibilities for tasks. They must begin by establishing their power, authority or not, in order to fulfill responsibility. Because there is no legitimate basis, the whole system at the denominational level is confused. Power has to find its own channels. The same is true in the local congregation.

Without a formal system an informal system emerged. This, rather than protecting the democratic process from authoritarianism, actually has produced a power system which works outside the democratic structure. An illustration of how the professional executives actually operate without a formal system is provided by Harrison when he says:

The authority of the professional executives of the Convention is gained primarily through their ability to achieve assigned goals. The "influence" they exercise - generally acknowledged as considerable -- is grounded in something other than rational-legal authority.¹⁰

This corresponds to earlier statements by Dale and Zeleznik.

When the formal system of authority does not allow adequate power to do the job the Baptist executives develop their own base of power. What Harrison says is

¹⁰Ibid., p. 69.

true also in the Disciple system. He says:

The source of their influence is two-fold: the formal system of authority and the informal system of power. The primary basis of their legitimate authority is pragmatic rather than legal.¹¹

Because the Baptist system does not effectively correlate power with authority, Harrison argues that in spite of its democratic claims of non-authoritarian structure, the Baptists in fact are no more democratic than other denominations. In fact, some think that because of a failure to recognize the legitimacy of a system of authority, the Baptists and similar congregational denominations have left the door open for persons in the positions of power to operate nearly unchecked. Such a system, which, in its formal paper structure appears to be democratic, is open to such manipulation of power that it may actually become autocratic.

This provides ample demonstration of how both formal and informal systems operate within organizations. In particular it shows how the fact of an informal organization makes invalid the congregationalist claim to a system that guarantees democratic processes.

¹¹Ibid.

CHAPTER V

INDIVIDUAL POWER IN THE GROUP

In the late 1930's Kurt Lewin and others were bringing the term "group dynamics" into prominence. Studies were beginning to provide evidence that groups were not static, along the lines of a formal organization. Rather, it was shown, groups were dynamic. It came to be the accepted idea that there is an active process going on in all human relationships. An organization, or group, is a system of powers. These powers inter-act, affecting one another and thereby altering the nature of the group.

It was Lewin who developed the "field theory," a way of describing the multiple influences touching each individual. Each individual's "field" overlaps other individual's fields. Groups also have their "fields."

It has been determined by studies that different types of structure within groups produce different reactions. The classical study is that of Lewin, Lippitt and White, made at the University of Iowa in 1939. It clearly showed that democratic leadership in a group changes the climate in such a way as to produce greater interest in participation and less frustration and aggressiveness. Authoritarian leadership produced tension in the group and hindered progress. This indicates in some small way how a group is altered by a particular style of leadership. The dynamics are altered by one

person, thus changing the whole group. The study of the chain of events resulting from the influence of one individual upon the other, how the chain works, and how it may be controlled or altered, constitutes the field of group dynamics.¹

The field of group dynamics clearly relates to the problem of how the Disciple clergyman works in the congregation in that it shows how influence does not rest solely on the leadership qualities of the individual.

Helen E. Durkin, a psychiatrist and group worker says:

The former notion of innate leadership qualities has almost completely been replaced by the idea that leadership is a function of the group which derives from the relationship between the personality of the leader, the members, and the conditions under which they work together.²

Groups, then, are complex systems of inter-relating persons who represent some field of power.

Influence in a group has to do with how much power the individual has and what effect it produces in the group or organization. A number of factors contribute to individual influence in the group.

I. POWER OF BEING

Power has to do with an individual's or group's ability to control, guide, or influence other individuals

¹Helen E. Durkin, The Group in Depth (New York: International Universities Press, 1964), p. 14.

²Ibid., p. 30.

and groups.³ Paul Tillich talks about "the power of being." He points out that everyone has a greater or lesser degree of power. He sees each meeting of people as a meeting of power with power in which a determination is made about how much power each one has. As he states it:

Every encounter of somebody who represents a power of being with somebody else who represents another power of being leads to a decision about the amount of power embodied in both of them.⁴

Tillich joins Durkin in the observation that there are infinite variations in the relative powers of people in each human interaction. The interaction becomes more complex as the number involved increases.

Tillich also notes that there is a power hierarchy in every group. This power emerges from the interactions of individuals. He says:

In any encounter of man with man, power is active, the power of personal radiation, expressed in language or gestures, in the glance of the eye and the sound of the voice, in the face and figure and movement, expressed in what one is personally and what one represents socially. Every encounter, whether friendly or hostile, whether benevolent or indifferent, is in some way, unconsciously or consciously, a struggle of power with power.⁵

³Arnold M. Rose, The Power Structure (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 45.

⁴Paul Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 41.

⁵Ibid., p. 45.

Tillich, in talking about "power of being," and describing the power struggle which occurs between people, is describing informal power. This is the actual force involved in the function of groups and organizations. It is clearly different from formal structures of power.

II. FACTORS IN PERSONAL INFLUENCE

As Tillich has pointed out, there are numerous factors involved in the determination of power of being. Franklyn Haiman, in his studies of the characteristics of those actually wielding influence in groups, has noted a number of these factors.

1. Personal Characteristics. He notes that group leaders have social traits which exceed those of others in the group. Such factors as self-confidence, cooperativeness, and verbal facility are important.

2. Tradition. Haiman points out that in some groups and organizations the leader "is conspicuously devoid of any leadership traits, yet continued to exercise his position and exert significant influence on the rest of the members of the group."⁶

It has been previously noted how the Disciple elder had great influence in the congregation. The elder often had more influence than the clergyman who usually exceeded the elder in training and leadership

⁶Franklyn S. Haiman, Group Leadership and Democratic Action (New York: Houghton, Mifflin, 1951), p. 114.

qualities. Yet, the elder was supported in his position of power by the tradition. In the course of time the tradition shifted this influence to the clergyman, who, in Disciple congregations, is seen as a person of power and influence primarily on the basis of the general tradition of the ministerial role. To consider the clergyman as the leader is not based on his personal ability, rather, on the tradition that gives him that status. The minister's role is one in which tradition plays a significant part in granting influence beyond that warranted by a man's skills or ability.

3. Magical Power. Haiman believes that another source of influence comes from two "highly mystical" sources. One is the idea that leaders automatically rise out of need. The other idea is that God will raise up a man for the occasion.

The first has relevance to group dynamics, which talks about the leadership void and how leadership does emerge in groups. Haiman may consider it mystical, yet it is a fact that leadership does tend to emerge in groups. The second idea has relevance to the matter of motivation for a man to enter the ministry. We talk about "a call from God." This is certainly mystical, or in Haiman's language, magical. The clergyman is endowed with a special type of influence by those who think of him in this way. Most clergymen have experienced situa-

tions where someone called him to the bedside of some sick person with the belief that somehow his prayers can work wonders which ordinary prayers could not. A similar endowment of power falls upon certain football coaches, physicians, psychiatrists, and other similar professions. This "magical power" is an endowment which exceeds either the qualities or qualifications of a particular man, or those powers implied by his office.

4. Accident. Haiman accepts the fact that some people fall into leadership, rather than rise to it. By being in the right place at the right time, by taking the job when no one else would take it, by running for office when the incumbent was well beyond retirement age, by speaking out in group meetings, by any number of circumstances people fall heir to leadership and thus to influence.

5. Prestige. A person who has wealth, social prominence, membership in status organizations, or proximity to important people has a head-start in social groups. Prestige is often tied to economics, giving the more prosperous members of a group a "weight advantage" in the encounter of one power of being with another. Thus, the higher salaried clergyman, or one who has independent resources, could be expected to enjoy more influence than those who have less. The other markings of prestige, such as clothing, automobile, degrees, and

others, add to one's potential ability to influence.

6. Conditioned Needs. Groups become conditioned to a certain style of leadership. The person who occupies the leadership role may automatically be seen as an authority, or father-figure.⁷

We can see how the clergyman walks into the authority role and is such a figure for some people. As a result, he is endowed with all manner of attributes and wisdom which have no actual basis. To the degree that the clergyman is the recipient of the father-figure, or authority projections of his members, or of the community, he holds considerable influence in their lives and activities.

7. Special Skills. Some groups grant leadership to those who have special skills. Haiman says that the more mature groups are not so influenced by the previously listed six factors, but are able to choose leaders on the basis of skills. He states that the mature group member

prefers to turn to leadership to individuals who possess specific skill in the particular jobs that need to be done.⁸

The Haiman studies indicate that most groups do not make skills a primary factor in choosing leadership. The

⁷Joseph W. Knowles, Group Counseling (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), p. 108.

⁸Haiman, op. cit., p. 21.

mature groups are in the minority.

In the church context it can be seen how some leadership and power is granted on the basis of skills. A traditional way of interpreting I Corinthians 12:4 - 11, and Ephesians 4:11 - 12, which speak about "the gifts" granted to Christians, is that these "gifts" are mandates to leadership. So it is that the preacher has a place on the basis of his gift for preaching. The same for the teacher and administrator, and so on.

In the modern church, prestige and influence come to those with particular pulpit powers. We call such a person "a prince of the pulpit." Other such skills which would serve to give the clergyman influence are those of money-raising, membership-recruiting, or building-construction.

It remains important, however, to remember the results of Haiman's studies, and those of others who conclude that leadership, or power in groups, comes primarily from sources other than special talents.

Another important study of how individuals gain influence in organizations and groups is that done by Ross and Hendry. They summarize the basis for personal power in three categories instead of seven. There are, they report, three routes to leadership:

1. The person who has achieved pre-eminence by unique attainment, who is ahead of his group, a person of the calibre of Einstein.

2. The person who by designation, for whatever reason has been given official leadership status involving formal authority, who is the head of his group.

3. The person who emerges in a given situation as capable of helping the group determine and achieve its objectives and/or maintain and strengthen the group itself, who is a head of his group.⁹

Ross and Hendry support the conclusions of the "new theorists" in management science who see leadership and power as a group, rather than individual, function. This also agrees with the Haiman studies. Rather than talk about a particular leader or power in the group, they talk about the "leadership structure" of the group.¹⁰ They support the idea that power, or influence in a group, is a gift of the people, "of the people, by the people, and for the people." They cite studies indicating the importance of the leader being accepted by the group. He must be acceptable to the group and have status within the organization.¹¹ They say "The leader, whatever else, must be identified by the members of his group as a group member."¹²

In describing how a person accomplishes change in individuals and groups, one of the most important

⁹Murray G. Ross and Charles E. Hendry, New Understandings of Leadership, (New York: Association Press, 1957), p. 15.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 23.

¹¹Ibid., p. 46.

¹²Ibid., p. 49.

factors, according to Professor Howard Clinebell, is the achievement of acceptance by the group. This acceptance is the key by which the group allows the individual to wield power and influence. To one who aspires to leadership with the hope of bringing about change, Howard Clinebell suggests:

Build a relationship of trust between change agent and the individuals or groups experiencing change; it is the safety of this relationship which becomes an "island of change," permitting persons to become less afraid of change and therefore able to participate in the process. The trustful relationship is the instrument of change as well as the environment of change, in that the influence of the change agent is contingent on his being accepted, trusted, and respected.¹³

This chapter has sought to understand what management science calls "informal organization" in terms of group dynamics. Groups and organizations are seen as dynamic in character, rather than rigid. Within the groups individuals with varying degrees of "power of being" relate to one another. This power of being comes to a person through a number of possible channels. To the degree that the group recognizes these factors and grants the favor of influence by acceptance of the individual, that individual has power in the group or organization.

¹³Howard J. Clinebell, Jr., "Procedures For Stimulating Creative Change (Growth)" (Claremont: 1968), p. 1.

III. THE ELMHURST STUDY: A MIS-CALCUTATION OF POWER

To illustrate the significance for the clergyman of what has been said in this chapter about individual power in the group, we turn to a report called "The Elmhurst Study." This study was done by Charles Dailey to determine what lay behind a split in the Elmhurst Presbyterian Church.

The Elmhurst Church was a congregation with a membership of about 500 adults. After three years, during which time the new minister had attempted to make major changes in the structure and goals of the congregation, a meeting was called to request the resignation of the Pastor and his associate.

The minister saw the problem as a battle between "the power structure" who wanted things to remain much as they were, and a progressive group who were with the minister in wanting to transform a "suburban Sunday morning social club" into a vital Christian congregation. As attempts to alter the power structure increased, opposition toward the minister increased.

Those who objected to what the minister was doing listed their complaints in the following way:

- social activities were being discouraged
- the program was being dictated by the national Church

- sermons were hard to understand, critical, and offered little comfort to the congregation.¹⁴

The congregation's power structure saw the minister as representing a kind of change they were not ready to accept. As they were pushed beyond bounds acceptable to them, the power structure polarized into an opposition force against the minister. Ultimately the issue was over whether to stand with or against the minister.

Dailey compares the situation to secular ways of understanding power. He describes the congregation as a "miniature culture." Each community, each congregation, has its own particular culture. Each individual culture may be just as strange in subtle ways as a foreign culture.

Dailey points out:

Any culture, as a system, will, however, defend itself. Outsiders are automatically regarded as alien and a threat to the order, in proportion to the power they wield. A new minister must become acculturated over a period of time.¹⁵

In the Elmhurst situation the clergyman attempted to exert power which the group had not yet granted him. He had not built a relationship of trust. He had not become an accepted part of that community's structure to the degree that he could make any major change.

Another factor in this situation is that of

¹⁴Charles A. Dailey, "Managing Group Tensions" (Chicago: McCormick Theological Seminary, December 13, 1966), p. 2.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 4.

structure. Dailey draws on the experience of group dynamics which has shown that power at the top tends to protect itself. In the Elmhurst Church power rested with the Board of Trustees. The Trustee's power was threatened as the minister attempted to move into the power role. Like any other power, the Trustees resisted being deposed. The clergyman not only over-estimated his own degree of power, but under-estimated the vested interest of the Trustees in their power.

The Elmhurst Study shows how the lack of awareness of power factors halted a clergyman's opportunity to make change. Dailey comments:

The attempt to revise, within only two or three years, an entrenched social system which had built up precedents over 75 years, strikes one as exceptionally naive. In contrast, even with much greater power, an industrial executive will only very gradually succeed to power in a large corporation.¹⁶

In the Disciple system, where structure is even less supporting than the Presbyterian system, the clergyman needs all the more awareness of the nature of power in organizations, and the nature of personal power. The clergyman, whatever his "power of being," is but one of the powers at work in the organization. While the congregation may grant some powers to him immediately, there are other aspects of power which must be earned over a long period of inter-relationships.

¹⁶Ibid.

CHAPTER VI

PERCEPTIONS OF POWER OF DISCIPLE CHURCHMEN

Preceding chapters have described the historic understanding of the congregational power system. The clergyman has been described as lacking in formal power. Yet, the development of the Disciple movement has brought about gradual changes in the place of the clergyman in the organization. He has risen in influence, according to recent Disciple historians, even though his official power has not changed.

In light of the studies reported in the previous chapters it would seem wise for the local pastor of a congregation to have some insight about where he stands in his congregation, realizing that each congregation has its own perceptions of the various power relationships. Such insight, if it reflects in any way the informal power system, would be of more immediate value than the structure of power described in the constitution.

In this chapter will be reported some of the results of three simple studies. Two of the studies were conducted with the Executive Board of a local congregation. The third was done with a group of clergymen and board chairmen at a conference on lay-clergy communication. In all cases the persons involved were members of Disciples of Christ congregations. Revisions for the third study

were suggested by Dr. John McConahay.¹

These three small studies cannot be seen as producing conclusive information due to their limited sample. They are presented as an example of ways by which the pastor might seek information which would allow him to make judgments about how power is perceived by leaders in his congregation. From such information he could understand present role expectations on which he could base plans for alteration. Such information should be exceptionally helpful to the clergyman in the congregational system due to the variation from independent congregation to independent congregation.

I. SURVEY ONE

The first survey was taken in May, 1968. The Executive Board was made up of eighteen members, most of whom were completing their second year together on the Board. The survey offers possibility for expression of feeling about the way in which it functions, and, at the same time it offers an opportunity to express reaction to the degrees of power exerted by themselves, the chairman of the board, and the minister. This group has authority exceeded only by the congregation itself. Therefore, its understanding of the decision making processes is important for the clergyman's understanding of where he fits

¹Instructor in Psychology of Religion, School of Theology at Claremont, 1968-69.

in the organization. Survey items will be presented and commented upon in the order in which they appeared on the survey report.

1. Indicate experience on Church Boards

a) Over many years	<u>8</u>
b) At least once previous	<u>6</u>
c) First experience	<u>1</u>
Total	<u>15</u>

2. What has your experience been?

a) Frustrating	<u>5</u>
b) Unneeded	<u>1</u>
c) Satisfying	<u>10</u>
d) Enthusiastic	<u>2</u>

3. How do you feel about Board Meetings?

a) Previous Boards

1) Long	Yes <u>5</u>	No <u>3</u>
2) Dull	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>
3) Loose	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>
4) Productive	<u>8</u>	<u>1</u>

b) This Board

1) Long	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>
2) Dull	<u>2</u>	<u>7</u>
3) Loose	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
4) Productive	<u>13</u>	<u>0</u>

The reason for seeking comparison between the present and previous boards is to see if there is evidence of difference between a board which operated by the more formal Robert's Rules, and a board which operated by common consent. The second board operated by common consent. The sample here is too small and too vague to come to any conclusion.

4. In Church Board meetings do you feel

a) Free to participate fully	Yes <u>15</u>	No <u>0</u>
b) Opinions respected	<u>14</u>	<u>1</u>
c) Accepted as a person	<u>15</u>	<u>0</u>
d) Pressed to conform	<u>0</u>	<u>14</u>
e) Free to dissent	<u>13</u>	<u>1</u>

f) Presence important	Yes	<u>14</u>	No	<u>1</u>
g) Decisions fair		<u>15</u>		<u>0</u>
h) Christian teamwork		<u>12</u>		<u>3</u>
i) Chairman too dominant		<u>1</u>		<u>13</u>
j) Minister too dominant		<u>0</u>		<u>15</u>

This group reflects satisfaction with the democratic processes by which it operates. The response about the domination of the chairman and the minister indicates probable approval of their particular roles. The question might be raised as to whether chairman and minister exert enough influence in the board.

5. Do you feel that the Board				
a) Leads church aggressively	Yes	<u>10</u>	No	<u>3</u>
b) Operates as a team		<u>14</u>		<u>1</u>
c) Shares work fairly		<u>12</u>		<u>3</u>
d) Reaches group decisions		<u>14</u>		<u>0</u>
e) Clears understanding		<u>9</u>		<u>4</u>
f) Seeks to resolve tension		<u>12</u>		<u>1</u>
6. Do you feel that the Chairman				
a) Listens to each member	Yes	<u>15</u>	No	<u>0</u>
b) Is alert to each member		<u>15</u>		<u>0</u>
c) Allows adequate discussion		<u>15</u>		<u>0</u>
d) Moves toward group action		<u>12</u>		<u>2</u>
e) Is too formal		<u>1</u>		<u>14</u>
f) Causes group frustration		<u>1</u>		<u>13</u>
g) Is fair		<u>15</u>		<u>0</u>

The responses in this section would indicate that the group is satisfied with the function of the chairman. He seems to be allowing the group to hold the power.

7. Do you feel more comfortable when the meeting is run by		
a) Strict parliamentary rule, or		<u>0</u>
b) Group consensus method		<u>15</u>
8. Do you feel that there is more frustration and roadblocking by		
a) Strict parliamentary rule, or		<u>12</u>
b) Group consensus method		<u>1</u>

The responses to these two questions indicate how

well the group seems to have adapted to the less formal consensus style of conducting business. A further study might test reaction to the return of parliamentary rule.

9. How do you see the minister's role in Church Board meetings?

	Yes	No
a) Observer only	<u>0</u>	<u>14</u>
b) Advisor to chairman	<u>12</u>	<u>3</u>
c) Resource only	<u>0</u>	<u>11</u>
d) Silent puppeteer	<u>0</u>	<u>13</u>
e) Interpreter	<u>14</u>	<u>0</u>
f) Promoter of "his projects"	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>
g) Listener	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>
h) Pastoral support	<u>15</u>	<u>0</u>
i) Peacemaker	<u>13</u>	<u>1</u>
j) Coordinator	<u>13</u>	<u>2</u>
k) Professional authority	<u>12</u>	<u>1</u>
l) Part of team	<u>15</u>	<u>0</u>

In general, this Board likes the clergyman in roles where he actively participates as "part of the team," as "advisor to the chairman," or as coordinator and interpreter. The most negative responses were to his function as "observer only," or "resource only." This Board seems comfortable having the clergyman, not only advise, but even to promote "his projects" and participate as "professional authority." The question allows for response to passive and participation roles, but does not allow expression with regard to dominant roles.

10. Who should be held responsible for the management of the congregation?

a) Minister	<u>2</u>	
b) Board	<u>10</u>	
Both	<u>3</u>	(voluntary write-in)

We note here an indication of some uncertainty about who is ultimately responsible for management.

Those who give responsibility to the Board conform to the

official chart. Those who indicate that the minister is responsible, or that both minister and Board are responsible, indicate a variation from the official practice. The next question, however, indicates awareness of who has the power.

11. Who has constitutional authority for the management of the congregation?

a) Minister	<u>0</u>
b) Board	<u>15</u>

The giving of responsibility, but the with-holding of authority, represents one of the frustrations of the congregational clergyman. We have noted in studies of business that such action is not limited to the church. This Board still holds the keys of power in the church.

12. The minister's role in Church management is as

a) Authoritarian manager	Yes	<u>2</u>	No	<u>8</u>
b) Servant of the Board		<u>6</u>		<u>7</u>
c) Advisor to lay leaders		<u>14</u>		<u>0</u>
d) Ex-officio observer		<u>7</u>		<u>4</u>

Question 12-b is ambiguous, thus an ambiguous response. The strong response to 12-c supports an earlier statement in support of the advisor role of the clergy. Number 12-d seems to negate the results of numbers 9-a and 9-c in which those responding clearly were negative toward observer-type roles on the part of the minister.

From such a survey as this a clergyman may begin to discover the way in which the congregation does its work. Further, he may be able to learn how he may participate more effectively. The minister would get at least a hint from this survey that the congregation likes

to have a part in the decision-making processes, that it sees itself as primarily responsible for management, that it is aware that it holds the keys of authority, and more important, that it likes the pastor to be a participating part of the system. He is not wanted as dominant authority, but he is not wanted as a silent observer either.

II. SURVEY TWO

Survey two was taken in October, 1968. The same congregation was involved, but the Board had been reconstituted. Some of the members of the previous Board were on the new Board.

The survey was more specifically designed to gain response to the minister's actual place within the structure of the organization. A survey, or one similar, can help the minister find two things about his leaders. First, he can see how they understand their formal structure. It would seem important that both clergyman and lay leader operate with the same understanding of their organization. Second, such a survey could give some understanding of the informal organization and the minister's place in that organization. As in Survey One, the minister may gain insight into the role expectations of the congregation which would save him later conflict.

Seventeen of the eighteen-member Executive Board responded to the questions asked. Again it needs to be noted that such a sample is too small for forming general

conclusions about the clergyman's power in the Disciple system. The survey is seen as a tool for discovering how an individual congregation understands the situation.

1. The Minister's administrative position in our structure.

For this question three possible diagrams are offered as descriptions of the official structure of the organization. In each the clergyman occupies a different place in the diagram.

a. 2

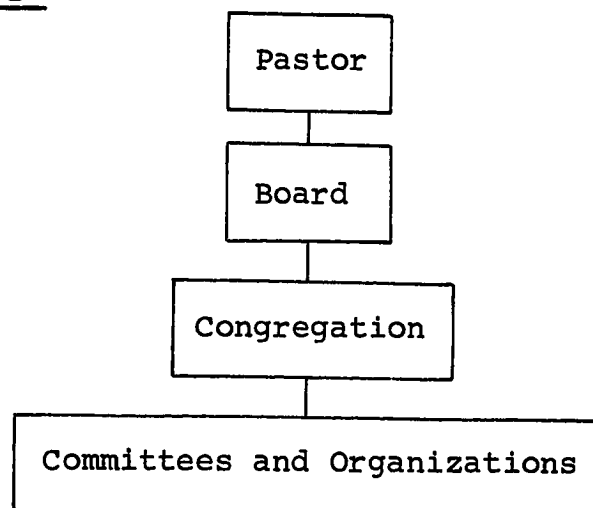


FIGURE 3

A PYRAMID ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Two of the eighteen Board members chose this as the way in which they understood the congregation to be organized. The organizational pyramid conforms to the classical system of organization where power resides at the top and filters down through the system. This chart does not conform to the official Disciple organizational chart.

The second alternative for description of the congregation's organization was designated as chart b.

b. 1

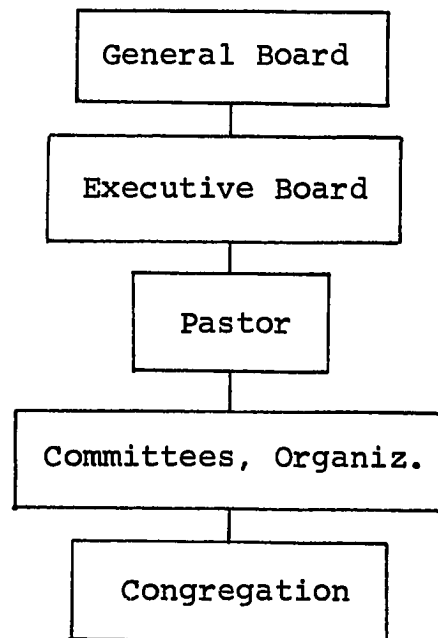


FIGURE 4

AN HOURGLASS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Figure 4 represents the kind of organization in which the officer in the center operates as an executive director. He responds to the boards above him and carries out their decisions. His role is that of a manager. Only one of the eighteen members of the Executive Board chose this as the organizational chart of the congregation.

The third alternative is one which represents the official organizational plan as shown in Figure 1 of the introduction. This chart is characterized primarily by the placing of the pastor outside the official structure.

c. 14

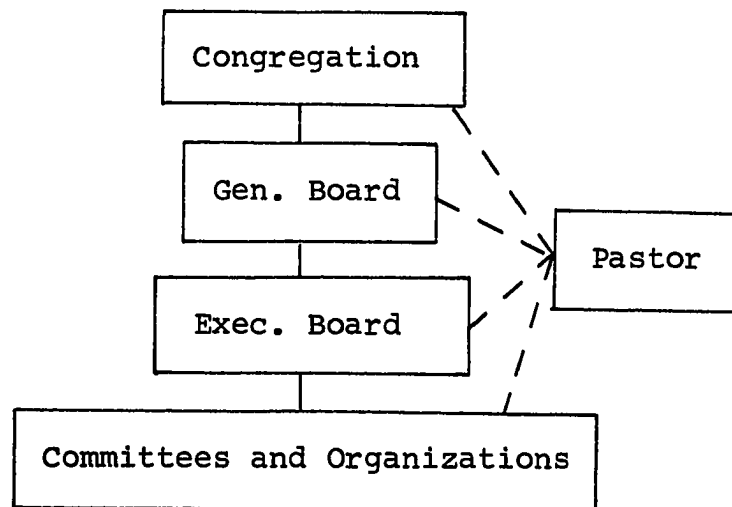


FIGURE 5

THE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE DISCIPLES

The fact that fourteen saw the minister's position as outside the official structure indicates that the majority are aware of the formal Disciple structure of organization. In such an organization the pastor is seen as an advisor, related loosely to all parts of the congregational life.

2. What part did the minister take in the following programs: (If you select more than one, list in order of importance).

a. Coffee House

Initiator	<u>1</u>
Manipulator	<u>0</u>
Coordinator	<u>1</u>
Promoter	<u>0</u>
Advisor	<u>15</u>
Administrator	<u>1</u>
Passive	<u>0</u>

The senior minister saw his role in the project as an advisor to the associate, coordinator between the project and the community, and offering counsel and encouragement to those more directly involved.

In this project both the minister and Executive Board saw his function in similar ways.

b. Change of Worship Hour

Initiator	<u>4</u>
Manipulator	<u>1</u>
Coordinator	<u>2</u>
Promoter	<u>5</u>
Advisor	<u>5</u>
Administrator	<u>0</u>
Passive	<u>0</u>

The initiative for this program actually came through one of the committees. The minister took the idea to the Worship Committee for approval. He discussed the change with groups likely to be involved. When the Board passed the plan, the minister publicised it. He saw his primary functions in this project as advisor, coordinator, and promoter.

The initiator role is over-emphasized, indicating an ever-present problem whenever the clergyman acts as

spokesman for an idea, whether it is his or not. He gets credit or blame as initiator. The coordinator role is not well recognized, yet represents perhaps the most important part of a successful program change which must involve a number of groups and individuals. As the coordinator, the minister carries considerable influence. He may add his weight in terms of person and office to that of any plan he seeks to transmit. In fact, it is doubtful that such a program change, involving the support of numerous individuals and groups, could take place without the minister's positive cooperation.

The advisor role is again seen to be important by the Board as a way for the clergyman to function. It should be recognized that the advisor role also holds considerable power in that the giving or with-holding of relevant information can play an important part in the decision-making process.

c. High Rise Apartment

Initiator	<u>2</u>
Manipulator	<u>1</u>
Coordinator	<u>2</u>
Promoter	<u>5</u>
Advisor	<u>5</u>
Administrator	<u>0</u>
Passive	<u>0</u>

The possibility of a high rise apartment for older persons in low-income brackets was proposed by one of the members. He offered to do preliminary work, and, with the minister's encouragement, did so. A committee was formed

and made a recommendation to the congregation. The recommendation was passed, but the controversy was such that the program was tabled. Two years later the project was revived when a member of the city planning commission saw a similar project in another city and inquired whether the Church had ever considered such a facility. Under that stimulus the committee was reactivated and the project is currently progressing through the planning stages.

The minister did not serve as initiator. He did convene the meetings, coordinate the work between the denomination and the city, and promote and interpret the program in the congregation. Thus the primary roles again were those of advisor, coordinator, and promoter.

As indicated in the response, the Board was again divided as to what the minister did in this project, giving equal weight to advisor and promoter roles. Since this corresponds to what the minister saw himself as doing there is no basic conflict.

The minister did support the tabling of the project when controversy developed, primarily because he had been with the Church only a brief period of time. Such strategy proved valid in light of the later development of the project.

Again we see how much influence the clergyman has even though he has no official authority in the program.

By entering into the enabling roles the clergyman has power to facilitate or cripple a project.

d. Building Renewal

Initiator	<u>2</u>
Manipulator	<u>1</u>
Coordinator	<u>6</u>
Promoter	<u>1</u>
Advisor	<u>1</u>
Administrator	<u>2</u>
Passive	<u>0</u>

Initiation for this renewal project, which finally cost \$90,000.00, came from the Trustees. They determined the building needed major renovation. The minister was involved as an advisor in suggesting the services of a denominational building consultant. He was involved as a promoter of the project through pulpit statements and articles in the Church paper. He saw himself about equally divided between the roles of coordinator and administrator.

Administration falls on the minister in such a case as a building project because contractors and business persons perceive of the minister as owner or authorized manager of the institution. As such, the minister represents the Church when questions and problems suddenly arise.

In this type of situation the congregational polity clergyman faces the danger that he will act beyond his authority. Since his word will be taken as contract and authorization he is exercising power beyond his

authority. He needs to exercise care that he keeps faith with the will and intent of the congregation and not allow himself to go beyond his representative capacity. Such work might well be classified as "coordination," and, as such would fit the understanding of this particular Board.

3. Number in order the degree of power of the following:

Minister	<u>1</u>
President of Congregation	<u>0</u>
Executive Board	<u>3</u>
General Board	<u>1</u>
Trustees	<u>3</u>
Elders	<u>0</u>
Deacons	<u>0</u>
Deaconesses	<u>0</u>
Christian Women's Fellowship	<u>0</u>
Finance Committee	<u>0</u>
Congregation	<u>10</u>
Staff	<u>0</u>
Big Contributors	<u>0</u>
Church Committees	<u>0</u>

This response shows some uncertainty about the primary power in the congregation by some members of the Board. The minister's level of power was rated from 1 to 14 by the various Board members. He averaged out as the fifth most powerful person among the groups and persons listed.

The results of this question must be seen in light of the fact that the Executive Board is unusually aware that the only power that exceeds their own is that of the congregation. Further, the tendency is that the Executive Board is thinking in constitutional, or organizational

terms, rather than how things really are. The response indicates judgments made on organizational terms which may not reflect how power is actually exercised.

In light of Disciple polity and tradition it is surprising that the clergyman is rated as high as fifth in the power factor listing. One member rated him at the bottom in terms of power, which would have suited the early Campbellites. As it is, this Board rated the minister higher in actual power than the President of the Congregation, Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses, Women's Fellowship, Finance Committee, Church Staff, Big Contributors, and Church Committees. In spite of having no official standing in the constituted structure of the congregation the minister is recognized as having considerable actual power.

4. List in order of importance (1 - 5) the basis of the Minister's influence in the organization of our Church.

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| a. The minister's natural rights as an ordained minister. | <u>2</u> |
| b. The minister's ability to manipulate various leaders and friends. | <u>1</u> |
| c. The minister's natural authority as manager of the Church. | <u>1</u> |
| d. The minister's dominant personality. | <u>0</u> |
| e. The minister's ability to persuade the members of the correctness of his particular course of action. | <u>1</u> |
| f. The minister's ability to work cooperatively with authorized committees and boards. | <u>10</u> |

- g. The minister's claim to spiritual authority. 0
- h. The minister's authority from headquarters. 0
- i. The minister's ability to get his supporters in key positions. 0
- j. The minister's ability to stir people's emotions. 2

By tabulating responses in terms of second and third choices, the following order of influence factors resulted:

- Minister's ability to work cooperatively.
- Minister's ability to persuade.
- Minister's rights as ordained minister.
- Minister's authority as manager.
- Minister's dominant personality.

In light of sociological studies of factors which make for influence, the survey should also have included such choices as prestige, social status, and general skill. As it is, cooperative ability is seen as the key to the minister's influence in the congregation. Other factors are actually far down the line in importance. This tends to support previous responses which indicated that the most favored role for the minister was that of advisor to the leadership and members of the congregation.

5. Choose the one sentence which best describes the way a minister is expected to function in our kind of organization.

- a. The minister functions in our organization as the man in charge, under authority granted to his position. He is expected to initiate ideas, get support for their approval, and take major responsibility for carrying them out. 0

b. The minister is employed by our church to be a manager as directed by the committees and boards. He acts in behalf of the church as its agent, making such decisions as are necessary in the operation of the Church. 2

c. The minister in our Church works cooperatively with groups, committees, and individuals, his primary influence coming from behind the scenes counsel and encouragement, his personal interest and urgings, his sharing in both planning and execution of Church programs. 15

The response to this verbal statement of the organizational plan of the congregation, and the place of the clergyman in it, corresponds to the response to the organizational diagrams in question 1 of this survey.

Further, the response gives support to other sections of this survey in which the minister is seen in the role of a cooperator who shares in the planning and work projects, but does not supervise or direct. As the question is stated, the desired and actual roles of the minister seem to conform. In such a survey, if the roles are seen to differ greatly between the actual and the expected, we would have an indication of potential conflict between the minister and the organization.

III. COMPARISONS OF SURVEYS ONE AND TWO

Although the samples are too small for more than general conclusions, the two surveys reveal some important similarities with regard to the function of the minister in the congregation and the means by which he has influence.

First, the most common statement of the minister's

role with respect to the official organization is that of advisor. The initiator, authority, and managerial roles are minimized in the responses to the two surveys. This conforms to traditional congregational polity.

Second, actual power and authority in the Church rest with the congregation, not the minister. Members of both responding Boards see it that way and like it that way.

Third, the clergyman has influence and power in spite of having no official place in the organizational structure. Rather than wielding power from above, or outside the organization, his influence occurs in the midst of the groups. His influence is seen to depend largely on his ability to work cooperatively with the authorized bodies. If the clergyman is able to learn these things from the surveys they will have been worth whatever time and effort involved.

IV. SURVEY THREE

This survey was taken at a lay-clergy conference on communication between pulpit and pew. Twenty-five of one hundred and twenty-five Southern California Disciple congregations were represented. Again the sample is too small to do more than indicate how some ministers and laymen feel about the influence of the clergyman.

Of those responding, twenty-five were clergymen and thirteen were laymen. The laymen were Board chairmen

of their local congregations.

The questions are similar to some degree to those asked in Survey Two. Alterations in the design of the survey were made at the suggestion of John McConahay. The survey was done so that responses from Board Chairmen could be compared to those from clergymen. By adding a sample of clergymen we get an idea of whether perceptions of power are similar or different when compared to the laymen.

Any radical difference in understanding of structure of the organization, or of the place of the clergyman in the structure should be considered an indication of potential conflict.

The Survey

1. Select the organization chart which you feel best describes the position the Minister holds in the structure.

a. Clergy 6 Lay 2

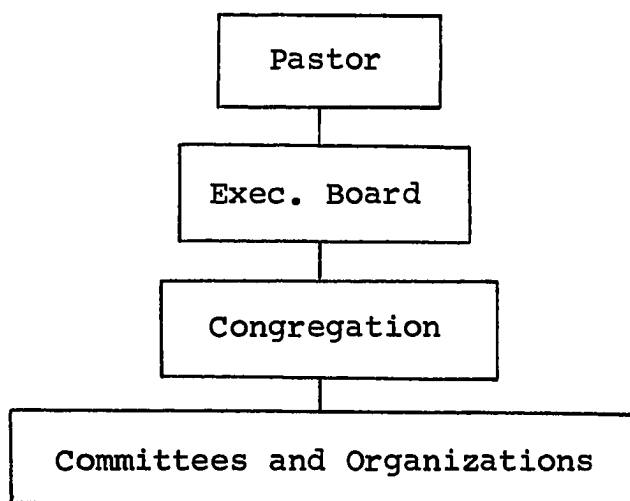


FIGURE 6

A PYRAMID ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

The organization chart in Figure 6 represents the classical way of perceiving organization. Authority flows from the top downward. It may represent the system of many organizations, but it is not the system of the Disciples. We note that six of twenty-five clergymen see this as the description of the way in which their organization functions. Two of the laymen selected this as the pattern for their congregations.

b. Clergy 8 Lay 3

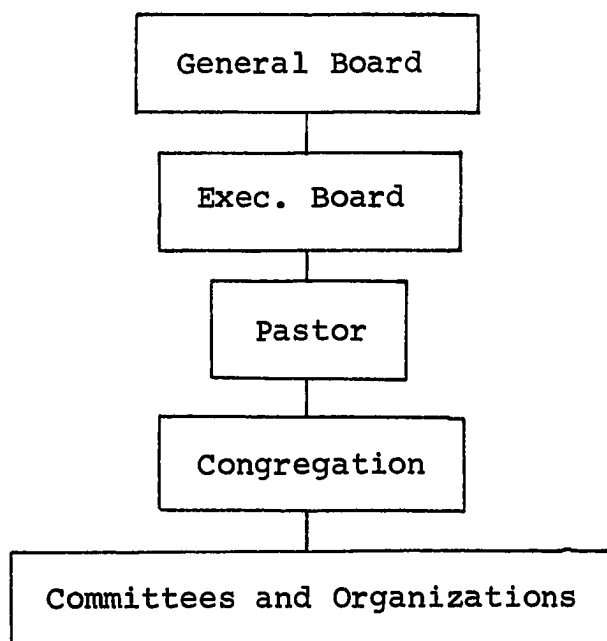


FIGURE 7

AN HOUR-GLASS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

In the organizational structure in Figure 7, all work is channeled through the officer in the center. This makes the center officer an administrative secretary, or a manager. His task is to carry through on assignments passed to him from those to whom he is responsible. Eight clergymen see their role as that of a manager. Three laymen have a similar understanding of their organization. Again we note divergence from usual Disciple structure.

c. Clergy 10 Lay 9

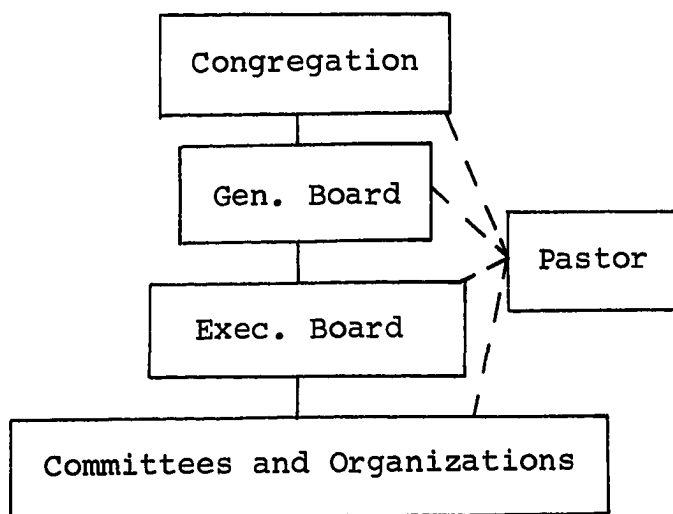


FIGURE 8

THE DISCIPLE SYSTEM OF ORGANIZATION

This organization clearly places the pastor outside the usual structures of authority. He is seen in Figure 8 as an advisor to various parts of the congregation.

Ten, less than half, of the clergy selected this as their understanding of the way they worked in the congregations they served. Yet nine laymen, representing almost two-thirds of their number, selected this as the way in which they understood their organization to work. While the sample is far too small to jump to any conclusions, there seems to be an indication that clergy understand their place in the organization in ways different from their lay leaders. This could be a warning of potential conflict.

2. Number in order the degree of actual power of the following in your congregation.

	<u>Clergy</u>	<u>Lay</u>
Minister	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>
Board Chairman	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Cabinet or Exec.	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>
General Board	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>
Trustees	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Elders	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Christian Women	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Finance Committee	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Congregation	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
Staff	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Big Contributors	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Functional Committees	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

The responses to item 2 are not tabulated in total. Only listing of first choices of power persons or groups is made. The response of the laymen may be mis-leading because there are only thirteen of them as against twenty-five clergy.

When the term "actual power" is used as it is here there is an altering of the statement of power. This survey supports what Disciple historians have reported, namely, that in the course of 160 years the place of influence of the Elders and the Ministers has been reversed.

From a constitutional point of view this response is inaccurate, because the formal structure is congregational. The congregation has ultimate legal power. But in terms of day to day activity the result of this response indicates that in eyes of both lay and clergy, the minister has the highest degree of actual power. This has to be considered informal power, because it is

not backed by official structure. Laymen and clergy agree in this response that the Executive and General Boards have the second most actual power in the work of the congregation.

3. Which word best describes the Minister's function in your Church organization?

	Clergy	Lay
Pastoral Director	<u>12</u>	<u>9</u>
Manager	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Coordinator	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Advisor	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
Manipulator	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Administrator	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Executive Secretary	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>

The sample does not allow making conclusions. It seems, however, that lay leaders and clergy were in general agreement about the description of the minister as "pastoral director." Ministers, but not laymen, picked up such terms as manager and administrator in describing their functions. These may reflect the desire for greater recognized power in the structure of the congregation.

4. List in order of importance (1 - 5) the basis of the Minister's influence in your congregation.

	Clergy	Lay
Rights granted by ordination as Minister of Gospel.	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>
Ability to manipulate leaders and friends.	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Authority from position as manager of organization.	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
Dominant personality.	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
Ability to persuade members of correctness of his view.	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>

	Clergy	Lay
Ability to work cooperatively with committees and boards.	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>
Spiritual authority based on call from God.	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>

Board chairmen and ministers agreed in their understanding of the basis for the minister's influence in the church.

Their list came out in the following order:

1. Ability of the minister to work cooperatively with committees and boards.
2. Spiritual authority based on a call from God.
3. Rights granted by ordination as a minister of the Gospel.

Responses two and three might be combined under Haiman's category of "mystical power." This strays from Disciple tradition in that Alexander Campbell and his earliest followers denied that a man could claim authority either on the basis of some special call from God, or by virtue of the laying on of anyone's hands.² Campbell maintained, along with modern social scientists, that power comes from the group.

Nevertheless, both clergy and laymen see these two characteristics of "mystical power" as having something to do with the minister's influence. However, the primary response of both groups agreed with results of the previous survey, namely, the most important single basis of the minister's influence is his "ability to work

²Eva Jean Wrather, "Alexander Campbell and the Structure of the Church," Discipliana, XXVIII (April 1968), 5.

cooperatively with committees and boards."

5. I think the Minister's authority in our congregation is

	Clergy	Lay
a. Too great	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>
b. Just right	<u>11</u>	<u>9</u>
c. Too small	<u>8</u>	<u>2</u>

If any indication can be read from this response it is that a higher percentage of laymen are satisfied with the present power status of the clergy than are the clergy. One-third of the clergy are of the opinion that their authority in the congregation is too small.

6. I favor an administrative structure in which the Minister has

	Clergy	Lay
a. A strong position in the administration of the congregation.	<u>9</u>	<u>4</u>
b. An advisory position in the administration of the congregation.	<u>13</u>	<u>10</u>
c. Very little part in the administration of the congregation.	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>

Again about one-third of the clergymen would like a strong position in their congregation. They are supported in this response by a similar percentage of laymen. But the largest portion of both groups favor the clergyman in the advisory position with respect to the work of the church.

Disciple historians would note a continuation of the gradual movement away from the early anti-clericalism in which the minister was totally separated from influence

over the work of the congregation. As the movement matured the minister was accepted as advisor, which is his official position today. The fact that as many as one third, representing the leadership of Disciple congregations, favor a plan in which the clergyman has even more actual power in the organization may be an indication of a still more radical departure from the early days of the movement. But what stands out as the most oft-repeated idea from these surveys is that the minister's influence is primarily associated with his ability to cooperate with laymen in the work of the congregation. This stands out above any other factor in determining how he has power.

V. A GENERAL MINISTERIAL SURVEY

Recognizing that the previous three surveys are only indications of how a clergyman might develop an understanding of his role within the congregation, the following general survey is offered for comparison. A survey of 117 pastors and 534 lay people in six denominations reports the kind of leadership which results in positive influence in congregations.

The studies indicate that the leader who knows how to work cooperatively with people is most effective. The term "positive association with organizational criteria," as used by the author, has to do with those things that indicate organizational strength and progress.

Among the conclusion reached in this study is the following:

Leader behavior that combined sensitivity to people and skillfulness in task facilitation was positively associated with organizational criteria.³

This is to say that the effective leader will develop a relationship of acceptability and mutuality with the people with whom he seeks to have influence. He will not surrender either his goals or his skills, but will introduce these into the relationships as the situation allows.

Another significant statement of conclusions reached in the study also supports conclusions seen in the brief surveys found earlier in this chapter. The author says:

The man whose leadership was instrumentally skillful and inspiring -- who could define roles, structure expectations, and take initiative -- and whose leadership at the same time was expressly tolerant of uncertainty in the group and encouraging of member freedom appeared more positively associated with organizational criteria. He served a larger church and was regarded as more effective.⁴

The phrase, "expressly tolerant of uncertainty in the group and encouraging of member freedom," encompasses the meaning of the survey phrase, "works cooperatively." As the surveys showed the advisory cooperative role was most desired of a clergyman, the Ashbrook studies show

³James B. Ashbrook, "Ministerial Leadership in Church Organization," Ministerial Studies, I (April 1967), 5.

⁴Ibid., pp. 24, 25.

also that such a role is most likely to achieve goals.

The point is well made that mere cooperativeness does not produce results, any more than mere skill and aggressive leadership produce highest results. Rather, influence in the church and other organizations requires a combination of both. As Ashbrook says:

What is clear . . . as has been found in other studies (Barley, 1961), is that leader behavior that is aware of both people and task activity tends to be more positively associated with organizational outcomes. Leader behavior that is insensitive to interpersonal processes and is inept in task facilitation tends to be more negatively associated with organizational outcomes.⁵

VI. SUMMARY

This chapter has reported findings in three small studies and one comprehensive study of churchmen. These studies provide insights into organizational understanding and the role of the clergyman in the organization. Although the three smaller surveys cannot be conclusive, they do point to some factors regarding the clergyman's role which can be validated by more adequate studies. Further, the direction of the conclusions tend to support studies reported in chapters four and five.

One of the conclusions is that every organization or group has both formal and informal structure. The great variation in understanding of structures is seen in the clergymen's responses to the organizational

⁵Ibid., p. 25.

diagrams. The statements about actual power, in which the clergyman is rated at the top, when the formal structure shows him outside the positions of power, indicate an informal system of power.

Another conclusion from the surveys is that the place of the clergyman in the formal structure is not a crucial matter. What is crucial is that his ability to have influence in the organization rests heavily on his ability to work cooperatively with those who have the official responsibility in the organization. Whether he has official authority or not, the clergyman's basis of power is largely cooperative ability. The fact is that he can and does wield great influence in the congregation as one involved in the action, not as one who operates formally from above.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Organizational charts of the Disciples of Christ, (Figure 1), indicate a typical congregational structure in which the clergyman stands outside the official structure. He is separated from the lines of power and authority. Yet, the clergyman in the Disciple congregation is charged with responsibility for leading the church to achieve its goals. His responsibility is not matched by authority.

The question which presents itself is, how can the clergyman accomplish his goals when he is separated from the official lines of power?

The history of the congregational system indicates that keeping the control of power in the hands of the people is one critical point. The clergyman is subject to the congregation. The Disciple system reflects this philosophy. Alexander Campbell's anti-clericalism, which was actually non-sacerdotalism,¹ influenced the whole Disciple attitude toward the ministry.

However, like any growing organization, the Disciples of Christ movement became more complex as it grew. In the process, the ability of laymen to manage

¹Eva Jean Wrather, "Alexander Campbell and the Structure of the Church," Discipliana, XXVIII (April 1968), 5.

the congregations was diminished. The complexity required someone to give more detailed over-sight to the work. The resident pastor filled the gap. Although the pastor became the worker on the job, official power and authority remained with the laymen. The organizational charts continue to reflect this system. The clergyman, whose professionalism Campbell dis-liked, evolved out of necessity into a professional. The evolution has been so complete that one observer reports a sociological study of Disciple seminarians showing "our ministerial candidates had a professional concept of their church career. Only the American Lutherans and Episcopalians indicated a higher level of professionalism among their seminarians."²

The Disciple clergyman is openly recognized as a professional religious leader, and, according to the study on Clergy Support done by the National Council of Churches in 1964, is the second highest paid of the denominations.³ Yet, the structure only places him in an advisory position.

In studying organizations of secular institutions, as well as organizations of other sorts, it has been shown that there is more than one kind of structure.

²William L. Miller, Jr., "Interpreting the Signs of the Times," Minister's Bulletin, XX: 5 (January 1969), 1.

³Ibid.

There are the formal descriptions of the way in which power is supposed to work in the organizations. There are also informal systems by which things actually are done. There are those who hold the titles, and there are those who, regardless of title, actually are the persons of influence. Studies of secular organizations indicate that goals are accomplished by going outside the formal structures.

A study of how power actually operates in groups reveals that individuals interact and confront one another with various "powers of being." Some persons, by virtue of their "power of being," rise to leadership in social groups. The influence of such persons depends on acceptance by the particular group. It is particularly noted that, though the office may add to the potential influence of an individual, his actual degree of influence depends on what the organization or group allows.

When churchmen are asked how they feel about the place of the clergyman, the conclusion is that he is best liked in advisory and cooperative roles, rather than in roles of authority. Surveys do indicate some lack of clarity about where the clergyman fits into the official structure. It is clear, however, that his place is not one of great authority.

From the point of view of official organization it might be of some help to clarify the Disciple clergy-

man's place in the structure of the congregation. It is evident that he is granted more than "invitation only," or advisory status. It would be helpful for both pastor and lay leaders to have a similar understanding of the organizational plan of the congregation.

But from the point of view of changing the ability of the pastor to get things done, changes in formal structure would not be likely to make any difference. In fact, a change in structure granting him more authority might cause him to attempt to function on that basis, which would actually diminish his ability to influence the congregation. Influence does not come from authority as much as it comes from ability to work cooperatively. The way in which the Disciple pastor gets things done is by working democratically with the duly authorized groups. Therefore, changing the formal structure to give him more authority would not contribute to his ability to get work accomplished.

If a new diagram is to be made to match the way in which the pastor actually wields influence in the congregation, perhaps it would be in the form of circles, instead of rectangles. Instead of the pastor being outside the circles connected by a dotted line, he would be included within each circle. He would be shown with the same "size" and color as others in the groups. As such he would exercise his influence to the degree that he is able

to participate effectively in the small group situation. Studies show that such shared participation is more effective than participation that is authoritarian and un-involved.

Such a role does not diminish the professional position of the Disciple clergyman. It actually enhances it by allowing him to be involved directly with the people who have decision-making authority and responsibility. He may introduce his personhood and skill directly, rather than secondarily.

This participating role fits the Disciple tradition in which clericalism is resented. The clergyman, by working within the groups, is neither outside, nor above, his people. He is in his true human position among the people as one of them. He shares with the people in the servant-role. It is a mutual ministry they share, in which he participates fully, with all of his professional ability, and with all of his humanity. It is a ministry accomplished not on the principle of power, but through the influence earned as a participating fellow Christian servant.

When the minister is not able to fit into such a role, or when a congregation does not allow such a role, the clergyman finds himself outside the processes of the life and work of the congregation. He may feel forced into authoritarian or manipulative methods of leadership.

These methods are proven to be less influential in the long run. Therefore the value of understanding the minister as a participant in the body of Christ. He is not the head, and he is not the foot. He shares in the body as a full participant.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The direction of this study should be tested with greater detail in more congregations. Such a study would be necessary to validate the present role of the clergyman in Disciple congregations.

A similar study should be done in a system in which the clergyman has official authority. The Methodist structure would be suitable for such a study. A comparison of results from Methodist and Disciple studies of how the clergyman exercises influence in the congregation should be made. If the studies reported in these chapters are a valid indication, the results of a comparative study should show that influence does not depend on official structure, but rather, the ability to work cooperatively with members of the congregation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. BOOKS

- Barth, Karl. Dogmatics in Outline. New York: Harper & Row, 1959.
- Brunner, Emil. The Misunderstanding of the Church. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953.
- Bultmann, Rudolph. Theology of the New Testament. 3 Vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951 - 63.
- Caldwell, Merrill. The Work of Elders in Christian Churches. Indianapolis: United Christian Missionary Society, 1968.
- Campbell, Alexander. The Christian System. Nashville: Gospel Advocate, 1964.
- Cohen, Arthur R. Attitude Change and Social Influence. New York: Basic Books, 1964.
- Dale, Ernest. Management Theory and Practice. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967.
- DeGroot, A. T. The Disciples of Christ, A History. St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1948.
- Drucker, Peter F. The Effective Executive. New York: Harper & Row, 1967.
- Durkin, Helen E. The Group in Depth. New York: International Universities Press, 1959.
- Garrison, Winfred Ernest. An American Religious Movement, A Brief History of the Disciples of Christ. St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1945.
- Goodykoontz, Harry G. The Minister in the Reformed Tradition. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963.
- Haiman, Franklyn S. Group Leadership and Democratic Action. New York: Houghton, Mifflin, 1951.
- Harrison, Paul. Authority and Power in the Free Church Tradition. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959.
- Hopkins, Terence. The Exercise of Influence in Small Groups. Totowa: Bedminster Press, 1964.
- Jacobsen, David C. The Positive Use of the Minister's Role. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967.

- Knowles, Joseph W. Group Counseling. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964.
- Leach, William H. Handbook of Church Management. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1958.
- Lundberg, George A., Clarence C. Schrag and Otto N. Larsen Sociology. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954.
- MacQuarrie, John. Principles of Christian Theology. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966.
- Madearis, Dale W. A Church Program Guidance Manual. St. Louis: Christian Board Publication, 1966.
- McGregor, Douglas. The Professional Manager. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967.
- Miller, James Blair. Our Church's Story. St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1961.
- Niebuhr, H. Richard, and Daniel D. Williams. The Ministry in Historical Perspective. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1967.
- Osborn, Ronald. In Christ's Place, Christian Ministry in Today's World. St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1967.
- Parrington, Vernon Louis. Liberalism and Puritanism, 1620 - 1720 (Main Currents in American Thought, vol. I) New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1927, 1930.
- Powell, Robert T. Managing Church Business Through Group Procedures. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1964.
- The Renewal of the Church. St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1963
- Robinson, William. The Biblical Doctrine of the Church. St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1948.
- Rose, Arnold M. The Power Structure. New York: Oxford University Press, 1967.
- Ross, Murray G., and Charles E. Hendry. New Understandings of Leadership. New York: Association Press, 1957.
- Scott, Ernest F. The Nature of the Early Church. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941
- Smith, William Martin. Servants Without Hire. Nashville: Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 1968.

- Streeter, Burnett Hillman. The Primitive Church. New York: Macmillan, 1929.
- Tillich, Paul. Love, Power, and Justice. New York: Oxford University Press, 1960.
- Uris, Auren. Developing Your Executive Skills. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1957.
- Walker, Granville. Preaching in the Thought of Alexander Campbell. St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1954.
- Walker, Williston W. A History of the Christian Church. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952.
- Weber, Max. The Theory of Social and Economic Organization. New York: Oxford University Press, 1947.
- White, Ralph K., and Ronald Lippitt. Autocracy and Democracy. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960.
- Wickizer, Willard M. A Functional Church Organization. St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1957.
- Zelevnik, Abraham. Human Dilemmas of Leadership. New York: Harper & Row, 1966.
- Zelko, Harold P. Successful Conference and Discussion Techniques. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1957.

B. ARTICLES

- Arnott, Robert J. "Toward a Theological Study of Institutions," Religion in Life, XXXVII (Autumn 1968), 417-428.
- Ashbrook, James B. "Ministerial Leadership in Church Organization," Ministerial Studies, I: (May 1967).
- Blakemore, W. B. "The Issue of Polity for the Disciples Today," in The Renewal of the Church, III, 52-81.
- _____. "The Christian Task and the Church's Ministry," The Renewal of the Church, III, 150-188.
- Campbell, Alexander. Christian Baptist, I.
- _____. "Church Organization," Millennial Harbinger (1853), 123.

Lindley, D. Ray. "Types of Religious Leaders and The Churches Ministry," The Renewal of the Church, III, 127-149.

Stevenson, Dwight E. "Concepts of the New Testament Church," The Renewal of the Church, III, 27-51.

Wrather, Eva Jean. "Alexander Campbell and The Structure of the Church," Discipliana XXVIII (April 1968), 3-6.

C. UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS

Clinebell, Howard J., Jr. "Procedures For Stimulating Creative Change (Growth)," Claremont: 1968. (Mimiographed)

Constitution and By-Laws. First Christian Church, Huntington Park, California, 1966. (Mimiographed)

Dailey, Charles A. "Managing Group Tensions," An Address. Chicago: McCormick Theological Seminary, December 13, 1966.

98868

THEOLOGY LIBRARY
CLAREMONT, CALIF.